

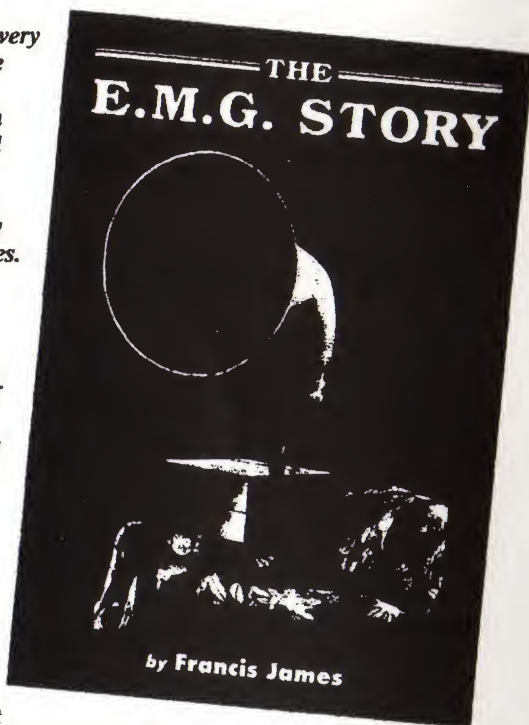
Hillandale News



No. 225, Spring 1999

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Cover Picture:- two of our Patrons, Oliver Berliner and Frank Andrews, photographed in London, 8th December 1998 (see item on p. 255). Photo © The British Library.

Hillandale News

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Issue no. 225 – Spring 1999

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EDITORS' DESK

Our Chairman's Chat, in the last issue, seems to have started several hares running, as you will see from Letters we have received, and published in this issue. In some respects, the 'Whither CLPGS?' debate has been kicked back into life, but there are some other aspects breaking the surface, as well.

Further comment from this corner at this stage would be unwise – even the most amateur journalist will tell you that once he has stimulated the argument, he doesn't get involved in trading punches, because his rôle is to report the skirmish and reflect on the outcome, so that we all come out of it wiser, if in some cases, bruised and a little sadder.

Change is still in the air, though, as we have to report firstly, that Suzanne Lewis has agreed to act as Membership Secretary. As you will see from the subscription renewal reminders in this issue, those who have to renew their membership should now send their remittances to Suzanne Lewis.

After a long period during which he has been of inestimable value to the Society, Don Moore has also announced his wish to relinquish his hold on the position of Treasurer, assumed on a temporary basis last year. The Chairman would therefore like to hear from any Member who feels willing and able to help the Society by taking on this indispensable and responsible task.

Turning to the content of the present issue for a moment, we see the return of Christopher Proudfoot's feature, reporting "From the Rostrum" on the current state of the auction market in

collectable machines. In an attempt to open up the magazine to the novices amongst our number (one of whom is on the Editorial Group!), we have leavened this feature with a range of photographs (helpfully provided by Christie's). Although the market is currently in the doldrums, according to Christopher, it seems to us that this sort of reporting is very useful, particularly to those of us who don't know about these things. And, if the market is slack, what better time to decide to look for that longed for piece of history, and actually go out and buy the machine of your dreams?

Mike Field's cautionary tale on the Crapophone in the last issue is succeeding in bringing the nature of these infamous machines more into the public gaze. One of your editors recently had the unenviable task of politely advising a 78 record dealer that his newly purchased domestic conversation piece was 'probably a fake', there actually being no doubt of it. And another of your editors produced a piece of intelligence that Crapophones were being 'unloaded' by dealers at a major trade fair in the East Midlands for as little as £65 each. Not that that would be a good price, even so!

Finally, and in the interests of the historically and electrically naïve among us, as well as to widen the range of articles, the editors would be interested to hear from any Member able to provide a series of articles providing an overview of electric gramophones from their early days up to the phasing-out of 3- and 4-speed turntables in favour of the 2-speed machines.

!! LAST ISSUE !!

Will Members who have not yet paid their subscription for 1999 please note that this is the last issue they will receive, unless the fee is paid forthwith.

Members are reminded that subscriptions fell due for renewal on 1st March 1999.

Please do not wait for a separate subscription reminder!

The subscription for 1999 remains at
£15 for the UK and Europe, (**£10** for students)
and at **£17** or **US \$28-50** for the Rest of the World (outside Europe).
Cheques should be made payable to "CLPGS Ltd.", and sent to –

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Buckinghamshire; HP5 1LG**

SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS IN LOCAL CURRENCY BY OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Overseas Members may who have not yet paid their 1999 subscription may send their subscriptions by 30th April 1999 to the Local Treasurers so that their names will be retained on the mailing list for the July issue. The Local Treasurers, who will also be able to advise on the correct amount to remit, are

Scandinavia: Mr. Tom Valle, [REDACTED] Oslo 10, Norway
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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Anniversaries are confusing things. This year marks our society's eightieth year, and yet, surely I have a catalogue on my bookshelf of a CLPGS exhibition at Cirencester with the words '80th Anniversary' emblazoned on the cover? Well, yes and no. Actually 1989 was just a good excuse for an exhibition, based on the year when the individual groups of like-minded enthusiasts first met to discuss their favourite subject. This year marks the anniversary of the amalgamation of those small groups to become the nascent society to which you belong today. Elsewhere in this magazine [p.281 - Ed.] is reprinted the report of that first historic meeting at which beer seems to have played an important part in the proceedings. On May 18th, Dominic Combe will be presenting the same programme which was played on May 28th 1919, and this time there will be wine on offer to all who attend. This will not however, be a simple, dusty re-enactment. Dominic will be putting the cylinders into their musical and historical context. The selection - a number of Blue and Royal Purple Amberols, includes a version of 'God Save the King' - uninteresting, you may think, until you know that it contains a verse no longer used because it so politically incorrect! The original meeting's report hints that a different machine - possibly an Edison 'Fireside' - was used to play the records on that distant night. - hence Howard Martin's humorous title for the evening, 'Fireside Blues'. Dominic will naturally bring his

Cygnets-horned 'Fireside' machine to the Swedenborg Institute for the event.

If there is room in his coffin, Alfred Clark will also be scratching his head about dates. Roger Thorne was reading backdate copies of THE VOICE and discovered that the illustrious founder-director of The Gramophone Company chose 1948 to celebrate the fiftieth year of his Company - and surely he should know. It would certainly have confused him to see the Centenary celebrated forty-nine years later.

Oh, yes, and could it be a whole year since you last paid your subscription? Doesn't time fly when you're having fun! You know what to do.

Howard Hope

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LONDON MEETINGS PROGRAMME

for April 1999 to January 2000

Date	The Presenter	Presents:
April 20th	Bernard Smith (Member of the Lewisham Recorded Music Society)	Stars of the Music Hall
May 18th	Dominic Combe	'Recalling those Fireside Blues – and a few Purples!!!' A Tribute to the first Society programme given by Adrian Sykes in 1919
June 15th	Colin Armfield followed by Tim Wood-Woolley	Non-shellac Ramblings and Warblings; Traditional Folk Music on Cylinder and Disc
July 20th	Frank Andrews	We Have Our Own Records
August 17th	Alan Palmer	Scottish Folk Music
September 21st	Members & Visitors	More 'Hen's Teeth' Members & Visitors present rare and exotic items associated with recorded sound (an opportunity to sell or swap???)
October 19th	John Passmore	Early Jazz of the 1920s
November 16th	Ewan Langford followed by Geoff Edwards	<i>Programme to be confirmed</i> <i>Programme to be confirmed</i>
December 21st	Members & Visitors	Traditional Members' Night Present your own records on the theme of "Transport"
January 18th, 2000	Alan Palmer	'Once a Jolly Swagman' (Peter Dawson)

Please note – the venue for all meetings (except 18th January 2000) will be at the Swedenborg Hall, Bloomsbury Way, LONDON, WC1, at 7.00.p.m.

IMPORTANT NOTICE re MIDLANDS GROUP MEETINGS

Permanent Change of Venue

Members wishing to attend future Midlands Group meetings should note that the venue will henceforth be –

**the Grimshaw Room, St. Chad's Roman Catholic Cathedral,
Birmingham.**

Please note that the vehicular entrance is from Shadwell Street. Off-street car parking is available. Contact the Midlands Group Secretary, Phil Bennett, (telephone [REDACTED]) for further details.

WEST OF ENGLAND GROUP Programme for 1999

Date & Time	Theme	Venue	Reporter
Sunday, MAY 23rd; 3.00 p.m.	Portable Picnick	Keith & Irene Badman's	Paul Collenette
Saturday, JULY 24th 3.00 p.m.	Joe Pengelly & Keith Badman will discuss their work in the Phonograph field	Keith & Enid Catchpole's	Tom Little
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 18th. 6.00 p.m.	A Boat Trip, with records Cost: £3-00, BBQ facilities	Countess Wear Bridge, Exeter Canal	John Edwards
Saturday, NOVEMBER 20th. 3.00 p.m.	A Meal on Record	Tom & Connie Little's	Paul Morris
Saturday, DECEMBER 11th. 5.00 p.m.	Christmas Special	Paul Morris'	A. Badman

THE CONCERT MACHINES

Part 2 - The Graphophone Grand

by Mike Field

This large heavy machine in its ornate oak cabinet was the first commercial machine designed for use with Concert cylinders. It was demonstrated in November 1898 and then offered for sale in December of that year at \$300. It was designed by Thomas H. MacDonald

to play brown wax cylinders of 5 inches diameter running at a speed of 120 rpm. Fig.1 shows the overall view without the horn which would most commonly be a large brass type supported by a floor standing crane.



Figure 1 – The Graphophone Grand.

The front of the cabinet hinges down to permit access to the motor (Fig.2) which is the large and powerful three spring type introduced in 1897 for the Graphophone "C" machine. One of its features is the governor drive wheel which is made of brass with a deep

annular groove cut into the circumference. This groove is filled with a hard leather insert on which the gear teeth are cut. The intention was to keep gear noise to the minimum, which it does, but the leather is prone to stripping and replacement is difficult.

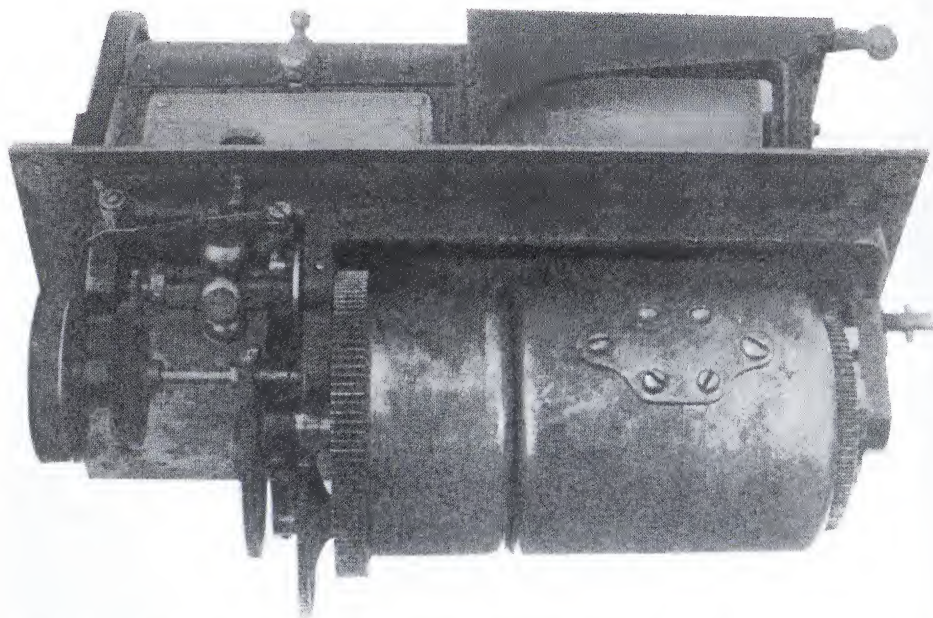


Figure 2 – The Graphophone Grand motor, removed from its case.

The feed screw, revealed when the hinged cover at the left hand side of the machine is lifted, is cut at 100 threads per inch on the same shaft as the mandrel. This is possibly the only example of a Graphophone which uses a directly coupled feedscrew. All later machines used a gear train between the mandrel and the feedscrew. Compared to the Edison machines of the period,

the feed nut and its arm are complex and consist of a substantial brass assembly hinged on the support rod (Fig.3) which does not incorporate a spring mounted feed nut as on the Edison machines. Instead the substantial weight of the arm to which the feed nut is screwed keeps the nut in contact with the feed screw. But there is also a curious feature of the arm.

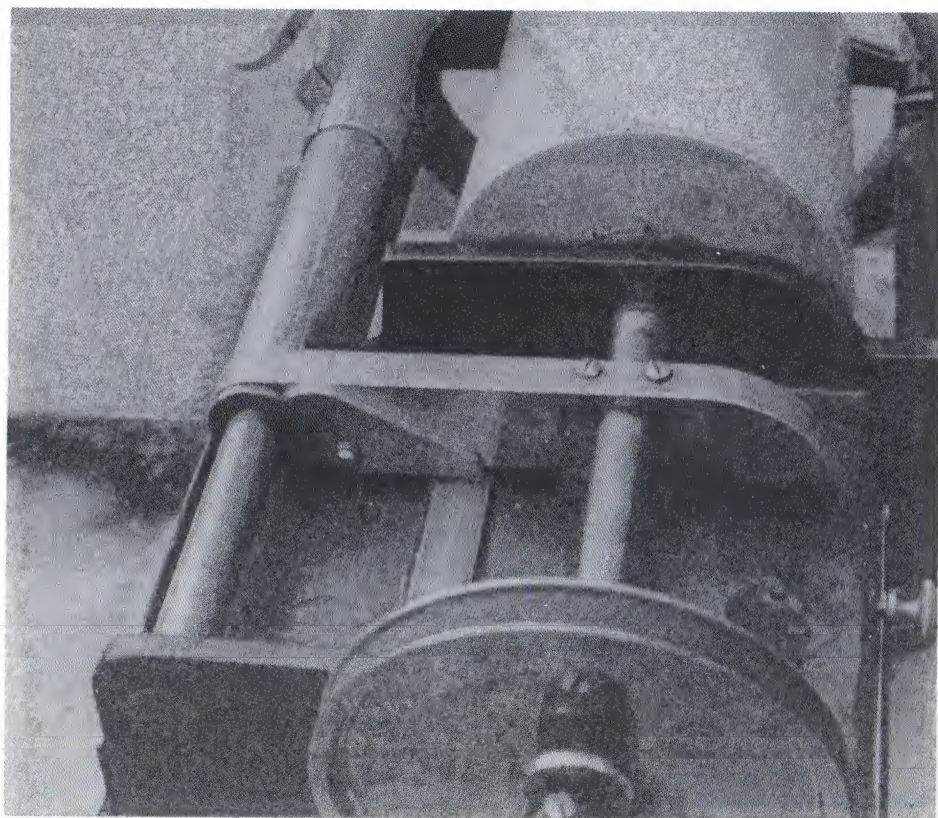


Figure 3 – The feed nut arm assembly.

When the cover is open and the reproducer support arm is raised, the feed nut arm follows suit all the way until the reproducer support arm can go no further. When the cover is shut the reproducer arm can still be moved to its full extent but clearly the feed nut arm cannot follow because it will foul on the cover. This apparent *impasse* is resolved by the use of a lever pivoted on the arm at the support rod end, the end of which is cut away to match a corresponding shape at the end of the support sleeve.

As the reproducer support arm is raised, the feed nut arm will move upwards until the arm contacts the cover. At this point the lever disengages from the support sleeve allowing the reproducer arm to move further without damage to the arm or cover. The reason for this complicated arrangement is unclear.

The reproducer is similar to the $1\frac{5}{32}$ inch aluminium type fitted to the Graphophone "Eagle". The support arrangement is however different (Fig.4).

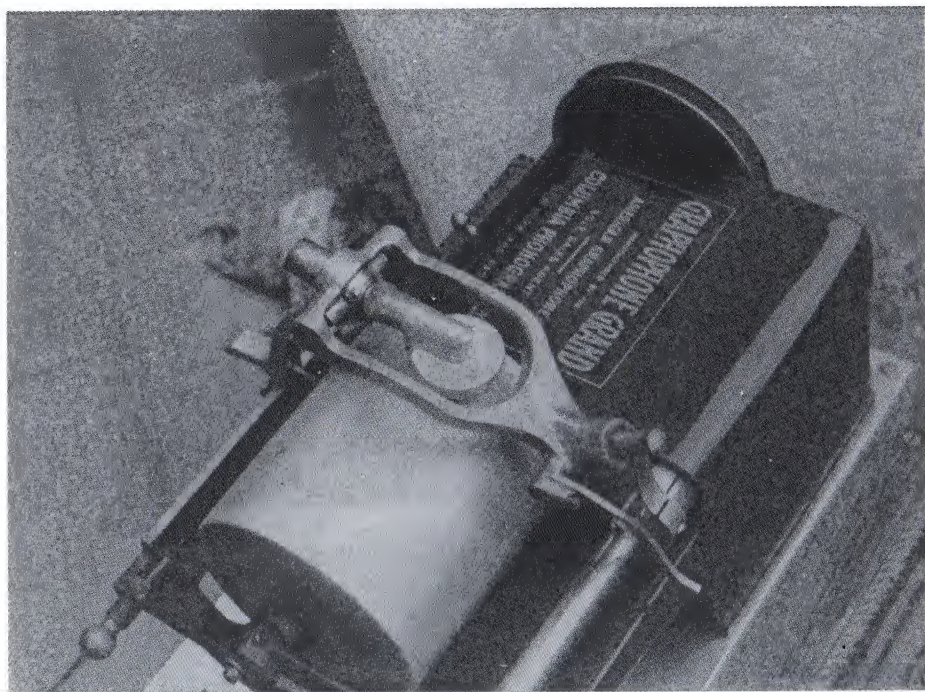


Figure 4 – The support arrangement for the reproducer.

In the Eagle, and other later Graphophones with a floating reproducer, the outlet tube of the reproducer contains a floating inner thin sleeve attached with a vertical pin which allows a certain amount of lateral movement to compensate for tracking errors. The sleeve is pushed on to a short piece of tube ending in a ball joint which is fixed by a horizontal pin to the reproducer support housing to permit vertical movement. In the Grand the reproducer is mounted on a T-piece which is pivoted at the end of the elaborate support arm by means of two adjustable cone screws. In the centre of

the T-piece there is a hollow ball which fits into a corresponding housing in the support arm so that the sound is conveyed to the fixed horn outlet tube without loss. The vertical position of the reproducer relative to the cylinder is adjusted by a grub screw, mounted at the front of the support arm, pressing on a small "tail" at the end of the reproducer body.

The Grand is a machine collector's delight, being early, full of unusual features and very pretty with it! Unfortunately not many of us will ever own one as total production seems to have been limited to the low hundreds.

From the Rostrum

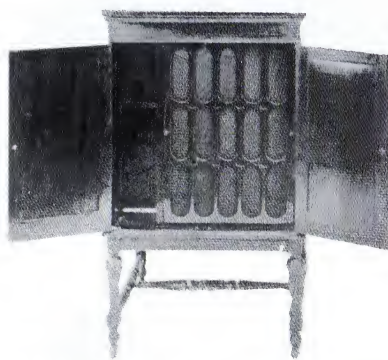
An occasional review of recent market trends

The December 1998 sale at Christie's South Kensington saleroom was dominated by musical boxes, but some interesting items appeared in the gramophone section, nonetheless.

As always, accessories seemed to interest people as much as machines: the first Lot, at £300, contained fifteen unopened 'Britain's Best' needle tins (all the same, apart from the paper bands, which were coloured according to tone), 25 others, five thorn sharpeners, three fibre cutters, a speed tester, and other bits and pieces. Later on, a comparable Lot included a Wild/EMG soundbox, a Pathé lateral-cut soundbox (looking too early for the Pathé change to lateral cut, and using the Nicole Master suspension system), two other soundboxes, three thorn sharpeners, a fibre cutter, 15 needle tins, and other bits. This all brought £260. (Do you remember when that soundbox alone could have made £400?). Elsewhere in the sale, a pair of EMG/Expert 2-spring soundboxes made £340.

One of the early sepia prints of *His Master's Voice* made £160 – it was from the G & T period, and even then, the printer thought the company name ought to include a 'Co'. On the other hand, one of the 1937 silver dealer shields, divorced from its original black mounting board, could only struggle to £100. (About £250 is the going rate for a complete one).

Among machines, Gems, Standards and Homes continue to evoke yawns among seasoned buyers; prices for all are pretty similar, in the £200-£300 range. Also disinclined to arouse interest are Diamond Disc machines, well represented in this sale.



The Schubert Edison Disc Phonograph.
Photo © Christie's

Most desirable was this 'Schubert' Edison, one of the two, rare late models with doors; this brought £500, just £20 more than a Chippendale Console with LP attachment and even an LP record thrown in – but who's got room for consoles? The pretty Baby Console, a mere 40 inches wide, achieved £130, with an HMV 523 radiogram thrown in as a bonus. On the subject of radiograms, normally refused entry to these sales, an HMV 800 managed £300. This was the granddaddy of all radiograms in 1934, with 15 valves among its attributes. (I heard of a

well-known dealer getting £2000 for an 800 a few years ago. Funny how the price drops once the only potential customer is out of the running!).



The Edison Chippendale Console Disc Phonograph. Photo © Christie's.



The HMV Model 800 Autoradiogram. Photo © Christie's.

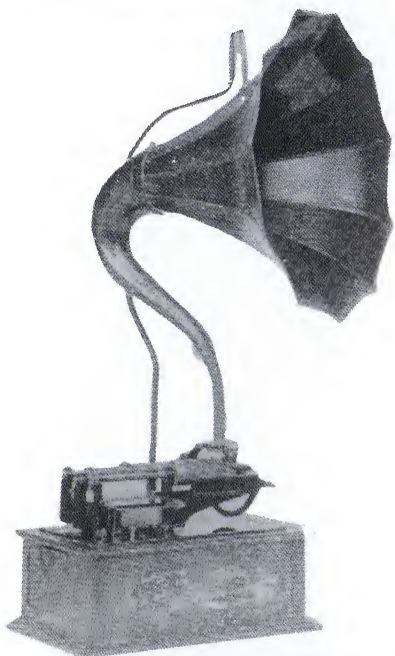
As a postscript to the Diamond Disc section, consider the case of a William & Mary upright, sold for £220 to a gentleman who knew nothing of Edison Diamond Discs, but thought the cabinet would make a nice stand for his slide projector. Can we hope for a new convert, once he investigates its superb mechanism?



The William & Mary Disc Phonograph. Photo © Christie's.

More successful was an Amberolized Concert, in New Style case, at £900 – not that this is the price of such a

machine. It was the horn they wanted, a No. 11 Cygnet with oak-grain finish.



The Edison Concert phonograph, with standard mandrel and oak-grained No. 11 Cygnet horn. Photo © Christie's.

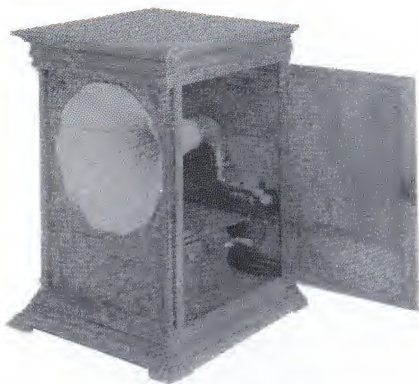
(For comparison, another Amberol-ized Concert, Spring Motor type, no less, with no horn, managed just £200). A very nice Columbia Champion disc machine with green flower horn, which no-one had seemed to want in August, achieved £600 this time round, while £700 was bid against the optimistic expectations of the owner of a BNW with oak horn. Trouble was the tone-arm (one of those narrow ones with a dog-leg at the rear end) – said dog-leg had been replaced with a beautifully engineered new section, doubtless as a result of the potmetal disease.



The Columbia Champion Disc Graphophone, with green flower horn. Photo © Christie's.



The Columbia BNW type Disc Graphophone, with oak-veneered horn. Photo © Christie's.



The Salon Pathéphone. Photo © Christie's.

The most expensive machine in the sale was a Salon Pathéphone, one of those curious enclosed overhorn models, but not a Concert: you couldn't get a 20-inch disc in it. This was the pity, because one of these discs, entitled "The Teddy Bears' Picnic", was on the premises at the time of the annual pre-Christmas teddy bear sale, and we would have liked to be able to play it. £1700, this one, and there were two runners-up at £1500, both of them mahogany members of the Monarch family. One was a Senior Monarch (the one known to many of us by its New Zealand name 'Ionic'), with a mahogany horn and a contemporary, but not Gramophone Company, pedestal cupboard stand. The other was a New Melba, its price kept down to the same level as its more common sibling by a tired-looking papier-mâché horn. The latter is comparatively rare, and seems to have offered a short-lived alternative to the brass Morning Glory at the top of the range, before the wood horn took over.



The Senior Monarch Gramophone, with mahogany cupboard stand. Photo © Christie's.



The New Melba Gramophone, with papier-mâché horn. Photo © Christie's.

Postscript. After writing the above, I received a request from the Editor to comment on trends in sales since 'From the Rostrum' last appeared, in December 1996. The simple answer to that is that nothing has changed very much overall, except that buyers are tending to be ever more selective, so that dreary things tend, if anything, to go down, while anything that is really outstanding can usually be relied upon to exceed expectations. It is probably well-known that the crazy prices being paid a few years back for the larger re-entrants have disappeared from the scene. In December 1997, a 193 sold for £1600 to a British collector, the first time I can recall one of these models not going to the Far East, or to a dealer for onward transmission thither. Reality struck home though, in August 1998, when a tired (but not irreparably so) 194

sold for £900. 163s seem unaffected by all this, good ones still bringing about £500.

Also cheap these days are horn gramophones by unknown, or not-rated, makers (i.e., almost anything other than HMV or Columbia). The proliferation of nasty Indian fakes has killed off their market with the 'I'd like one of those funny old horn gramophones' brigade, and serious collectors want a bit of pedigree. Machines that made £350-£400 in the late 1980s often struggle to get £200 now, even decent examples with original paint on their horns.

Christopher Proudfoot

(All prices quoted are exclusive of the 15% Buyer's Premium). Permission to reproduce these photographs by Christie's South Kensington is gratefully acknowledged.

Oliver Berliner and Frank Andrews – our cover photograph

The photograph on the front cover of this issue is one of a number taken on the occasion of Oliver Berliner's visit to London, on 8th December 1998. A reception was held in his honour by the British Library and The National Sound Archive, to which he was presenting a video tape recording.

The recording was of celebrations and speeches marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of Deutsche Grammophon GmbH/A-G., which had taken place in Germany during 1998. Oliver Berliner had taken part in the last of the proceedings, which had spread over three celebrations during the year.

It was a private function at the British Library, only a few persons in attendance.

Frank Andrews had been invited at the special request of Oliver, who at the time did not know that he had recently been elected a Patron of the Society, along with himself and our former President, George Frow.

The video recording was not shown on this occasion. In fact, unbeknown to Oliver, Ruth Edge, Curator of EMI'S Archives, had also been invited, and although the video was properly presented to the British Library, it was decided to let Ruth Edge have that copy for her archive, with Oliver delivering another copy the next day, he having another at his hotel.

Frank Andrews

A CASE OF CYLINDERS, no. 1

by Michael Hegarty

Over the next several issues I hope to take out a cylinder and “play it” by saying a little about the song or musical piece, together with a few lines about the artist.

First one out is an Indestructible 2 Minute, no. 657 – Murray – “Toora-loora-lay”. This is a black cylinder with raised lettering, patent dates July 29th, 1902. It was issued in November 1907 and was the second recording Billy Murray made for the company. Orchestra begins – bright, fresh and clear – much nicer than an Edison of the day to my ears:

*“When young Johnson the curate found
out that his flock
Went to Theatres it gave him a shock
He said why do they go to these places
of sin*

*I must find out so one night I’ll go in
About all kinds of crime it is right I
should know*

*So he went to a musical comedy show
The song that they sang really stuck in
his brain*

*He couldn’t stop singing the foolish
refrain*

It went Toora-I-oora-I-ay...”

and another verse and chorus.

Nicknamed “The Denver Nightingale”, Billy Murray was perhaps the most popular comic song recording artist in the pre-electric era. He recorded for most of the companies. Born in Philadelphia of Irish parents, his career began in 1903, and his final recording was in 1943. He died in 1954.



And this is Billy Murray, a frequent visitor to the Emerson Recording Studios.

THE CONNOISSEUR – BY COURTESY OF E.M.G.

by Christopher Proudfoot

Some years ago, I wrote some notes in these pages on the EMG soundbox, including a note (and a picture) of one of Harry Vitz's variations. Actually, on looking it up, I find it was twenty years ago, no less (February 1979) which just reminds one how Tempus does keep Fuging it. A variation I did not mention then, presumably because I knew it only by name and not by example, was the Wild.

Around 1930, W. S. Wild was advertising his Connoisseur soundbox and 'Tuned Meltrope' in an ad. which looks as if he had already acquired, sixty years ahead of time, one of those word processors that lets you choose a different typeface for every word. I don't know if a Wild Tuned Meltrope has any marks by which you can distinguish it from an ordinary Meltrope (if so, I have never seen one), nor can I imagine how you could tune a Meltrope, the whole point of which was that it gave excellent results from a simple, mass-produced design that was not dependent on fine tuning.

Anyway, at some point in the past twenty years, I acquired what looked like an early-ish EMG soundbox with a diaphragm printed with the legend

"Connoisseur" and "WILD WS". Not knowing whether this was a Wild soundbox or an EMG into which some fixer had inserted a Wild diaphragm, I added it to the collection and thought no more about it – until another one turned up, similarly marked, except that the initials "W.S." were in their right and proper place, the needle holder was the earlier, non-alloy type, and this one was in its original box with a Wild logo in the silk-lined lid. Clearly, the Wild Connoisseur was a thinly-disguised EMG, selling at the EMG price (£3).

Now, another has come to light, which has the Wild name engraved, in a home-made looking sort of a way, into the crossbar, and nothing on the diaphragm. The diaphragm itself is different, with one large corrugation instead of two small ones. Again, the original Wild silk-lined box has survived.

What all three have in common is a backplate polished and lacquered a rich, dark gold colour (in contrast to the satin, clear-lacquered brass of the front) and a Provisional Patent No. 22560/27. This number refers to the compressed rubber ring tone-arm attachment also found on Meltropes, and early examples of that make also have this provisional number.

The Gramophone, December, 1930

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MANOR ST
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Tube: "Clapham Common." London S.W.4

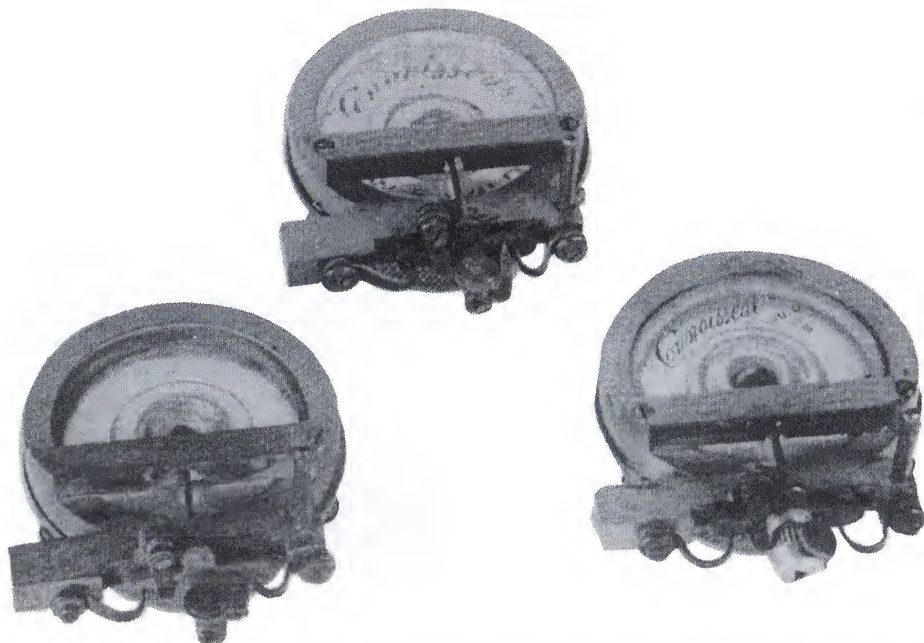
When granted, this was Patent No. 297559 of August 27, 1927, to A. F. J. Wright. Presumably, examples with the

Provisional number would have been made before, or not long after, that date. I do not know who A. F. J. Wright was,

except that other Meltrope patents were also in his name. Was he their proprietor, designer, Patent Agent, or what?

Clearly, Wild had some sort of deal with EMG over the supply of soundboxes,

possibly obsolete models. Can any reader add to this with information on other Connoisseur soundboxes, based on either earlier or later EMG soundboxes, or maybe some of other origin altogether?



Wild "Connoisseur" soundboxes, in presumed date order, from left to right. (Photo © Christie's.)

MIDLANDS' GROUP ANNUAL PHONOFAIR

A Date for your Diary

Saturday, 25th September is the date of this year's event. As usual, it will be held between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. at

St. Matthews' Church Hall

at the (A454) Willenhall Road/East Park Way junction, Wolverhampton.

Admission will be £1.

A DIGITAL SPEED READ-OUT DEVICE

by Joe Pengelly

The correct playing speeds of so-called 78s has always been a bone of contention. It has been bedevilled not only by a lack of preciseness in the setting of the speed of the originating disc-cutting apparatus, but also by deliberate speed manipulation by even such prestigious recording organisations as the American Victor Co.

I know of one vocal buff who could never reconcile their Gigli recordings – and others – of the 1920s with subsequent recordings because of the Victor Company deliberately recording at 76 rpm for playback at 78 rpm in order to give a little more ‘ping’ to the performance. In so doing, however, those few revs altered the critical vibrato of the voice.

On a personal note, as an aspiring tenor, I once used a Berlin Opera House orchestra 78 accompaniment disc of “Celeste Aida”, slowed down to avoid the top B flat notes. When the whole was speeded up on playback and brought back to correct pitch, however, my friends were unable to recognise the voice as mine! Such is the critical nature of vibrato.

To his credit, Edison realised the importance of correct pitch and to that end removed the speed controls on his cylinder machines from on top of the bedplate to underneath it to counteract the tendency of listeners to increase replay speed. For his Diamond Disc

machines, he even produced a test disc to achieve correct speed of replay.

Now, the Diapason Company in the USA has solved all my problems about ascertaining correct speed of revolve of both turntables and phonograph mandrels with a device which is both simple and positive.

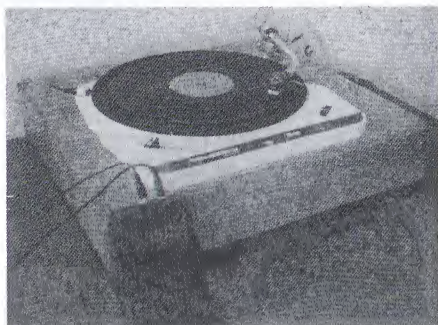


Figure 1. Speed read-out showing accepted speed of 75 rpm for Blue Zonophone Caruso disc.

A short black and white strip attached either to a turntable rim or mandrel via a sensor provides an instant speed read-out that can either be evaluated on a subjective basis, against a score or in line with researched published speeds. The speed range is all you could ask for – from 15 rpm to 300 rpm, so that setting my 20" Pathé discs at 130 rpm is, for once, a piece of cake.

I am aware that certain high quality professional studio turntables do have speed read-out, but I do not know of any pieces of equipment that can provide

this facility at a cost of around £300. Additionally, the speed of revolve of phonograph mandrels available with this equipment is unique and avoids the difficulty, certainly in Britain, of deciding where two bands of a strobe on a mandrel start to contra-rotate.



Figure 2. Sensor and black & white strip as fixed to a Lenco turntable.

This equipment is a must not only for historic vocal buffs, but also for musicians in general who wish to pitch scores correctly. It is obtainable from Diapason Turntables, 81 Mineral Street, Reading, MA 01867-2327; USA.



Figure 3. Read-out unit and adaptor for British mains supply.

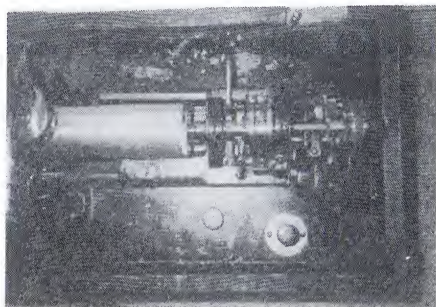
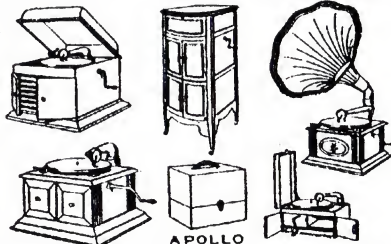


Figure 4. Black and white strip on right hand end of mandrel of Edison Amberola 1A phonograph.



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8-8-98; MAIDEN LANE

by Paul Cleary

Saturday, 8th August 1998 found two experts in the early history of recording, Dr. Peter Martland, former CLPGS chairman, Peter Adamson, Britain's foremost authority on Berliner records, and myself, a comparative novice in these matters but delighted to have been invited along, in the plush surroundings of Rules Restaurant in London's Maiden Lane, to celebrate, in our own small way, one hundred years of disc recording in Europe. Peter Adamson's research¹ has shown that the Gramophone Company's first published discs were etched onto zinc in the basement of no. 31 Maiden Lane, very probably on Monday, 8th August 1898, not on 2nd August as had previously been believed, and that the first recording artist was not Rules' famous barmaid Syria Lamonte, but one of a selection of instrumentalists who played into the recording horn on that day. Unfortunately, as one result of Peter Martland's work which has also altered a previously accepted date by moving the founding of the Gramophone Company back to 1897², EMI had already celebrated their centenary, and Peter Adamson's plans to invite more people connected with the recording centenary had not worked out. Kathleen Darby, CLPGS patron and daughter of William Sinkler Darby, had sadly died in July; Fred Gaisberg's niece, Isabella Wallich, now lives in France; various other interested persons were unable to be present; and Peter Adamson himself

was unable to be there on the evening of the 8th as he had originally intended.

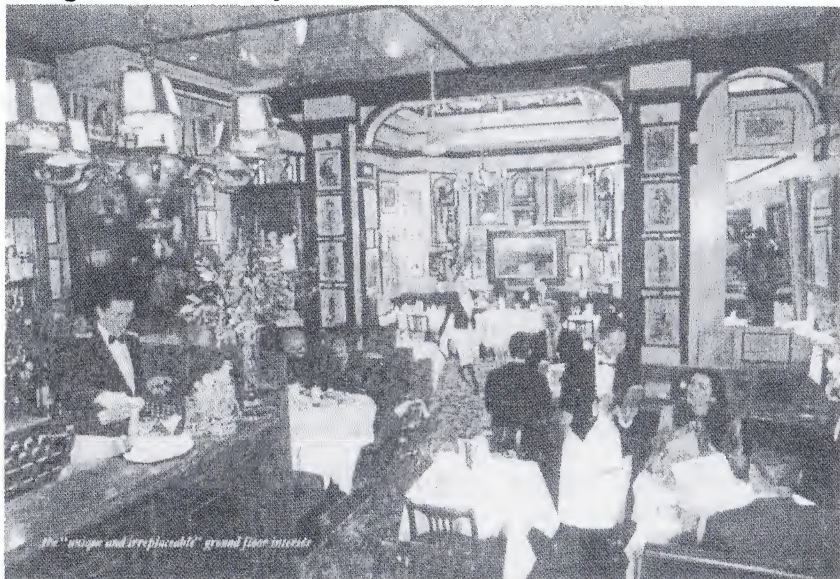


The label of Berliner E6001, showing the title, artist, date and location in Fred Gaisberg's handwriting

We did at least have with us one of the very first records from that day one hundred years ago, Berliner E6001, 'Melodie dei Puritani (Bassi)', a clarinet solo by Adolf Umbach of the Trocadero Orchestra. Peter Adamson pointed out to us various features of the disc, such as the handwriting, which was Fred Gaisberg's, the good quality of the pressing, which showed it had been manufactured in the United States prior to the opening of a European pressing plant in Hannover, and not least the date, '8-8-98', which conveniently reads as 'August 8th' whether written in the American date style or the European way eventually adopted. He then handed it to our waiter to show him t'

centenary we were marking – coincidentally, Rules were themselves celebrating their bicentenary. All we

lacked was a ‘Trade-Mark’ Gramophone on which to play it³.



The ‘unique and irreplaceable’ ground floor interior of Rules Restaurant. Photo © Rules and reprinted with their kind permission.

The conversation ranged far and wide, from finding out about the earliest recording artists and the rewriting of these into books, to digital sound restoration and the future of the recording industry; but all too soon our meal was over and we stepped out of the cool period splendour of the restaurant into the heat of Maiden Lane. A few doors down, number 31, still in use as offices but soon abandoned by the Gramophone Company for larger premises in City Road⁴, looked well in the sunshine ... But who was the moustachioed, bowler-hatted figure carrying a clarinet case who descended the steps and vanished into Bull Inn Court opposite...? Maybe the Rules

house red had been a little stronger than I thought!

References

1. Peter Adamson, ‘The first London disc recordings’, HILLANDALE NEWS no. 207 (December 1995), pp.411-422.
2. Peter Martland, ‘The beginnings of the Gramophone Company’, HILLANDALE NEWS no. 200 (October 1994), pp.123-125. See also his book ‘Since records began: EMI, the first hundred years’ (Batsford, 1997), and his PhD thesis ‘A business history of the Gramophone Company Ltd, 1897-1918’ (University of Cambridge, 1992).
3. The record has been re-issued, with another of Umbach’s Berliners, on Clarinet Classics CD no. CC 0005 (1993?).
4. Paul Cleary, ‘Maiden Lane, one hundred years on’, Talking Machine Review no. 95 (Autumn 1996), pp.2948-2949.

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Are "Revolvers" of Note and Never Miss!!!

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THE
ROSARY

A hearty welcome from
the music loving public.

1102b
THE BELLS OF
ST. MARY'S

One good "Turn" deserves another, and you get both on one
COLISEUM RECORD for 2/6 as per No. 1102. Enormous Successes

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LATEST LIST OF COLISEUMS.

Sung by Messrs. HAYES and CROFT.

- 1110 { When the lights go up.
Give me the moonlight (from "Hullo,
America!").
- 1111 { Give me a little cosy corner.
That li'l old home of mine.
- 1112 { I don't want to get well.
Many happy returns of the day.
- 1113 { K-K-Katie.
New Orleans.

Played by the BIJOU ORCHESTRA.

- 1114 { Maxima Dance.
Dream Dance.
- 1115 { The Muscouri Waltz.
Valse Delight.

Played by the ROYAL MILITARY BAND.

- 1116 { Victory and Thanksgiving. Part 1.
" " Part 2.
- 1117 { The Bells of Peace.
Victorious Chimes.

Sung by Miss AGNES PRESTON.

- 1118 { Night of Romance.
The Heart of a Rose.

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THE COLISEUM LABELS

Part 10 of 'We Have Our Own Records'

by Frank Andrews

The following paragraph on matrix numbers was also printed in the previous issue.... Because many records were sold by businesses which had their discs supplied under contract from the actual recorders and manufacturers, the stock rooms needed to know which metal masters were owned by a client, or were set aside for a client's use, and they had their original matrix numbers removed or obliterated, and a stock number applied for a client's label. As such pressed discs often carried artistes under pseudonyms, it is essential for the researcher to discover what the source of matrices could be in order that the correct name of the artistes be established. Where the obliteration of a matrix number has been done badly, or it has been thickly obscured by the overlying label, it is often not possible to say with certainty what the original label and artiste's credit really was. The creation of stock matrix numbers simplified the stocking of matrixes used for clients in the pressing plants. On the other hand, some companies are known to have put their own matrix series onto discs where they had received masters from foreign sources. That again necessitates tracking down the original source matrixes to discover the original accreditation of the artistes.

COLISEUM S F RECORD and **COLISEUM**. The 'S' and 'F' on the first Coliseum Record labels signified "Silk-Faced", as they were alluded to in the years of the first issues. This can be accepted with a great deal of salt.

Coliseum was never registered as a trade mark in Britain, but the label was registered in Germany by Beka Records A-G. of Berlin, which was under the control of Carl Lindstrom A-G. when the label was registered in 1912. Coliseum Records were not sold by the German companies in Germany, neither were they sold by Beka Records, established in the City Road, London, E.C. The Talking Machine News published the first list of Coliseum Records for sale in Britain in March 1912, which was then a new line to be stocked by the well-known North London dealer, Lloyd Thomas. Thereafter, there was no further mention of them until June 1912 when the original list was published again, with the Coliseum Records being advertised as belonging to Cooper Bros., of 17 Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.

William Cooper, the elder of the two Cooper brothers, had been an early exhibitor at premises in London, using a North American Phonograph Company-supplied Edison Phonograph, charging sixpence per person a time for listening

to cylinder recordings. This was in The Strand, but in the summertime, he would work the seaside resorts.

Later, he went into the manufacture of glass diaphragms and recording and reproducing styli, having premises both in Farringdon Street, London, E.C., and in Dulwich, south-east London. He went on to invent spider and dome parts for reproducers as well as tapered reproducers as a whole. These, it is said, were copied by some German manufacturers and used in the 'Puck'-type phonographs.

Joined by his brother Joe, the Cooper Bros. phonograph accessory manufactures continued, the business becoming established in the Goswell Road, London, E.C., where, in 1903, they began stocking Edison Gold Moulded cylinder records, the patents covering the phonograph industry having expired and no longer monopolised by the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co. Ltd. They also stocked other makes of phonographs and cylinder records. In 1908, they took on the new Rena Double Face Records; then, in June 1912, they began selling the Coliseum Records as the sole concessionaire for that label.

The records were all stencilled discs, pressed mainly from Beka Grand Records, but with other matrices coming from other Carl Lindstrom A-G.-controlled companies, so that the repertoire, although mostly by British-recorded artists, showed that European recordings were also used. With a catalogue numbering series beginning at 100, the original matrix numbers were dispensed with, and stock matrix

numbers, consisting of the catalogue number with 'A' and 'B' suffixes, denoting sides, were substituted. Later, true matrix numbers were in evidence.

An example of these relationships would be Coliseum Record 440, "The Kissing Duet", from "The Joy-Ride Lady", with music by Jean Gilbert. The artist credit is the Viennese String Orchestra, but on Beka Grand Records in England, the credit states the Beka Bijou Orchestra, while on Scala Records, in England, it is the Scala De Luxe String Orchestra. The actual artist was the Maxim Kwartetten Schrammel, of Vienna.

In August 1912, the 12" size Coliseum Records were introduced. These again were stencilled discs from original Beka Meister Records, as sold in England, or from Parlophon Records of the Carl Lindstrom A-G. itself, which sold in Europe. The 12" discs sold at 2s. 6d. each, whereas the 10" discs had been introduced at 1s. 6d. each. This was then the cheapest 10" disc on the market along with its 'stablemate' the Scala Record, which had been introduced at the same time, from The Scala Record Co. Ltd., for which Mr. Charles Howell was the manager.

At first, all the pressing from extant masters was undertaken in Germany, but with a new factory at Gas House Lane, Hertford town, known as The Mead Works, coming on stream in late 1912, some of the Coliseums began to be pressed there. The factory belonged to Carl Lindstrom (London) Ltd. and Fonotopia Ltd, both constituent parts of the complex of companies known as Carl Lindstrom A-G. of Berlin. That already established association of

companies allowed for 10" Odéon Records and Jumbo Records to find their way into the Coliseum Records catalogue. For example, comedian Billy Williams' song "Put a Bit of Powder On It, Father" appeared in 1909 on Jumbo Record 308, and again in November 1913 on Coliseum, with a Fonotipia matrix no., 472F.

The Coliseum Records derived from Fonotipia's matrices were given violet labels and sold more expensively at 2s. 6d. each. George Formby's Jumbo Records, when put to Coliseums, were given special catalogue numbers as well in a 1200 bloc in March 1914. (Collectors should note, regarding Formby's Coliseum catalogue numbers, that when the first phase of Coliseum Records ended in March 1920, and the second phase began in June of that year, the new series also began at 1200, but with entirely different titles and artists and from entirely different source material than the earlier Coliseum Records.)

By February 1914, Cooper Bros. were occupying additional premises at 35-43 (odd nos.) in the Clerkenwell Road, and during that year the 12" discs' numbering had approached to the lowest numbered 10" discs, so to avoid duplication of the numbers, the 12" size took on a block beginning at 5000, but the first issues using that series were not made until 1915.

A July 1914 report had it that Cooper Bros. had established a dépôt in Manchester in the Shudehill Road, and that more branches were to open in Newcastle and Glasgow.

It was reported from Canada in 1916 that Herbert Berliner's Berliner

Gramophone Co. Ltd. of Montreal was attempting to suppress the sale of the Coliseum Records by bringing an action against Messrs. A. E. Granby and John Smith who, trading as the Winnipeg Piano Company, had been a Cooper Bros. agency for the discs since *circa* July 1915.

Fonotipia Ltd. and Carl Lindstrom (London) Ltd. were put into compulsory liquidation in August 1916, under the wartime Trading With the Enemy Acts. A comptroller was earlier appointed to manage the shared Mead Works in Hertford town. Cooper Bros., who had another line in Lyceum Records and Lyceum machines, bought up all the Lindstrom gramophone parts from the liquidator during December 1916. Beka Grand Records and Beka Meister Records had their last releases in that month. In spite of the war, Cooper Bros. continued to extend their business in Coliseum Records, announcing they were to open more branches in Birmingham and Wolverhampton in June 1917.

Under the strict control of the British Board of Trade, The Hertford Record Co. Ltd. was established on October 29th, 1917, with financial and executive aid from The Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd., this new company taking control of the Mead Works on 1st. November 1917.

Arthur Gilbert (pseudonym as Arthur Osmond on discs) had lost his job as recording expert for Beka Records in London when it ceased trading in January 1917. It was said of his work, in September 1917, that it was he who showed the world what could be done with string bands, on records. He was

then reported as making recordings "in the ideal neighbourhood of Wembley, Middlesex". However, he was taken on by The Hertford Record Co. Ltd., where production carried on, producing Coliseum Records, Jumbo Records and Scala Records. The 35000 matrix number series, first started by Beka Records, by this time had progressed into a 36000 series (Favorite Records having demised in the early summer of 1916) with numbers as high as 36500 plus.

The final issues of this first phase of Coliseum Records were released in February 1920, reaching number 1156 for the 10" size. There had been approximately 1300 issued during the period from June 1912 to February 1920: the total output would have been greater but for reduced output during wartime conditions. The Hertford Record Co. Ltd. itself had become a subsidiary of Columbia in June 1919. Among the artists, often under pseudonyms, there had been, in orchestras – The Alhambra Theatre Orchestra, and The Palais de Danse Orchester of Berlin; in military service

bands, there had been The Royal Artillery, The 1st. Life Guards, The Grenadier Guards, and The Irish Guards. Two other famous bands were La Garde Republicaine and the Milan Municipal Band.

From Music Hall and Variety were Joe Archer, Wilkie Bard, Harry Bedford, Fred Bluett, Morny Cash, Harry Champion, George Formby, Eric Foster, Arthur Gilbert (Osmond), Gertie Gitana, Gus Harris, Jay Laurier, Jack Lorimer, Violet Loraine, Ernie Mayne, Ella Retford, Dusty Rhodes, Mark Sheridan, The Three Rascals, Vesta Tilley, Billy Williams, and Tom Woottwell.

Among the Concert and Ballad singers, one finds George Baker, Jessie Broughton, Joseph Cheetham, Jamieson Dodds, and John Perry, with operatic singers in Lenghi-Cellini, Franco de Gregorio and Alfred Tedeschi. Instrumentalists included Joe Morly, Olly Oakley and John Pidoux, all banjoists, A. Stroud Haxton, the violinist, and Henry Gheel and Alfred West, pianists.

Three months were to elapse before there was a -

Re-introduction of COLISEUM RECORDS – later to be re-styled COLISEUM.

To maintain their position in the market, both Cooper Bros. Ltd. and Chas. Howell, the manager of Scala, had to find a new source with matrices and a pressing plant, to launch a new phase in their Coliseum and Scala Records. There is some controversy about who did the pressing but not so much doubt about to whom the two concerns turned

for their matrices. My opinion is that they contracted with The Invicta Record Company Ltd., whose discs were pressed in Golden Green, Hadlow, near Tonbridge, Kent, by the Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd., the longest established pressers of disc records in Britain. It may be of interest to note here, that beginning with Guardsman

Records from the Invicta company on the May 1920 releases, matrices were in use from The Starr Piano Company of America whose label was the Gennett Record, and Guardsman titles began to appear in America on Gennetts. These American matrices and the British ones belonging to Guardsman, plus others belonging to The Sound Recording Co. Ltd., (who also had its matrix stock held in the Crystalate works and which Invicta had made use of to a small extent), were all drawn upon to press Coliseum Records and Scala Records. Both launched as new lines in June 1920, both had their catalogue numbering starting at 1200, and both having the same titles and type of artists, the following issues continued in such fashion until the end of 1920. Where pseudonyms were used, these invariably differed between the two labels.

There are those who have argued that this new series of Scala and Coliseum discs were pressed at The Universal Music Company's factory in Hayes, Middlesex, which was to put out the first Aeolian-Vocalion Records in December 1920, but I question this, on the grounds that the installation of plant to press the Aeolian Company's venture into discs in Britain, was not far enough advanced to allow newly pressed discs to be delivered to dealers in November. The factory had been under construction, and with subsequent plant installation, since April 30th, 1919, but the industry's trade periodicals were not sent sample pressings of the Aeolian-Vocalion discs until September 1920, with the records announced for December in the October.



Figure 1. COLISEUM RECORD 1212, pressed from a Gennett matrix.

During the month of launching, June 1920, Wm. Cooper and Charles Howell joined forces to form Cooper & Howell Ltd., which, little doubt, explains the sameness of the 1920 supplements of their respective labels. This new company was to be the medium through which further matrices became available to their individual labels, but also to a new, jointly owned label, put on the market in the style of TOWER Records. The new source was the pre-war Homophone and Homochord Records, the matrices of which remained in Berlin during the war. And another source was the Anker Records, which also had an outlet before the war under the Kalliope Record label. The owner or concessionaire of those matrices was the American, William David Sternberg, who was trading in England as The Sterno Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of gramophones and parts. His portable Sterno machine had been taken over by Columbia during the war. Sternberg joined Cooper & Howell Ltd. as a director, and some of his first titles for the Coliseum discs were issued

in December 1920, when a number of pre-war recordings of Billy Williams, the Australian comedian, appeared along with other pressings for the Scala Record and Tower labels. COLISEUM RECORDS had now become COLISEUM.

The Anker sources were almost exclusively from the 12" size, which were sold on two differently priced series under each of the three different labels, and were introduced in May 1921. It is probably true to say that the former Homophone and Anker matrices were never at the Crystalate works but that they were deposited directly into The Universal Music Co. Ltd.'s factory at Hayes. It was already known, within the trade, that Sternberg wanted to have his own line in discs and by August 1921 had established The British Homophone Co. Ltd.

During this period, a tenor who had appeared in opera at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, was contracted to make recordings which were dispersed within the three labels and on both record sizes. That was Tudor Davies, his efforts sometimes being catalogued under pseudonyms.

Wm. Sternberg's Homochord Records, from his British Homophone Co. Ltd., appeared in 1922, pressed at first by The Universal Music Company, at Hayes. Cooper & Howell Ltd., well aware of Sternberg's activities, had already resolved to remove him from its Board of Directors on February 2nd 1922. With Sternberg gone, the Tower records appear not to have had any additional recordings added to the catalogue after *circa* March 1922, although Cooper & Howell Ltd. remained in business. (If

anyone has a 10" Tower record, no. 331 or higher, please let me know.)

A break occurred in the printing of monthly supplements for Coliseum records after the June 1922 releases. Up to this point a stock matrix number with a zero prefix had been in use, which also appeared on the Scala and Tower labels. But with the next release of Coliseums in October, a new prefix 'CH' had come into use, but with the matrix numbers themselves keeping the same sequence, '01602' being succeeded by 'CH01603'. I think there is little doubt that the 'CH' prefix for stock matrix numbers signified Cooper & Howell Ltd.'s working matrices. But why was there that need for a change? The following factors may have had a bearing.

Firstly, The Invicta Record Co. Ltd.'s records business was acquired by The Aeolian Co. Ltd., and Invicta put into liquidation. This was the company *via* which Cooper Bros. Ltd. and The Scala Record Co. Ltd., had been able to introduce the second phase of their labels. Its Guardsman Records and registered trade mark went to Lugton & Co. Ltd. Already Guardsman had been making use of the American Vocalion matrices, which were part of the Aeolian-Vocalion stock at the Hayes plant since *circa* March 1922, but whether previous to that, the Guardsman records were still being pressed at the Crystalate works, or whether the matrices had gone to Hayes from Kent during 1920 or 1921 I have not resolved.

Secondly, Guardsman discs now began being pressed from Vocalion imported masters, having lost its source of American Gennett masters following the

liquidation of The Invicta Record Co. mentioned above. (Coliseum discs also began to use these Vocalion masters.) A few "held back" zero-prefixed matrices appeared in October and November.

Thirdly, at this period, the Hayes factory had been preparing to supply the market with another differently labelled disc for the Aeolian Company itself, the ACO record. This was introduced one month after the Coliseums resumed with the 'CH'-prefixed matrices, but the factory had also been geared up to press records for client customers, including John G. Murdoch & Co. Ltd., which was to introduce its second series of BELTONA records in December 1922; the GRAFTON HIGH GRADE RECORD, a new line from The Scala Record Co. Ltd.; and the MELOTO "MELLOW-TONE" RECORDS for the Meloto Co. Ltd. (which was to operate on the tally-man system, with its own Melotone Gramophones).

Those developments must have had some bearing on the four month break in delivery of Coliseums to dealers, which also affected the Scala Record Co. Ltd. to a similar extent, for the production of the Aeolian Vocalion Records and those for Sternberg's British Homophone's Homochords had also to be pressed. It is no wonder the The Scala Record Co., in December 1922, explaining away delays in deliveries, stated that 'its' factory was working day and night to catch up.

The matrix stock in the factory was quite diverse. The zero prefixes above 1100 were of Aeolian Vocalion stocks; those below, of earlier Coliseum, Scala and Tower issues; those with double zero prefixes were Beltona stock; the new 'CH' prefixes were for Cooper &

Howell Ltd.; and the new Aco discs had a 'C'-prefixed matrix number for new recordings. This also served as a stock matrix number for other makers' matrices, including Vocalion masters from the USA. The Guardsman stock matrix numbers had no prefix, the numbers being in the mid-2000 series. The British Homophone's Homochord records not only drew on parts of the extant stock, but also had its own stocks of true, proper matrices in the factory, consisting of the former Homophone and Homochord recordings which had been in Berlin during the war. There were also its own new recordings from its Kilburn, London studios, which were given 'L00' prefix numbers.

The Coliseum 'CH' matrices hid the fact that the source was then the Aco's 'C'-prefixed series.

Now, came another change: the last of the 'CH'-prefixed matrices was on one of the May 1923 issues, CH1371, on 1557, from Aco G15795, matrix C5566 (the Aco recording also used on Beltona, Grafton High Grade Record, Guardsman and Meloto). There was now another four or five month break in deliveries until Coliseums, with fresh recordings, again entered the monthly lists, but the stock matrix numbers were prefixed 'G', starting at 100, but with a few in the same number series having a 'GO' prefix. The 'G'-prefix was also new to Lugton & Co.'s Guardsman discs at this same juncture, the beginning of the 1923/1924 season, as were the few 'GO' prefixes.

The reasons for the change to the Coliseum's matrices would appear to be that Cooper & Howell were either in trading difficulties, or that Cooper Bros.

and The Scala Record Co. Ltd. wished to pursue their own ways. In any event, the 'CH' prefix disappeared and the company, when it was petitioned into compulsory liquidation at the behest of Charles Howell, then a director of The Scala Record Co. Ltd. and of the new Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd., in June 1925, its finances were in the red.

Now the 'G' prefixes for both Guardsman and Coliseum hid the true matrix numbers of the titles issued on Aco, but the 'GO' prefixes cannot be traced to Aco, and it may be that Lugton & Co. arranged some recordings for its own label, *via* which the Coliseums had their pressings.

The highest 'GO' number I know of on Coliseum is GO129; a few Beltonas and Scalas were also pressed from the 'GO's, which letters may have signified Guardsman Ownership (?).

In January 1924, came a report that said The Scala Record Co. Ltd. had arranged to become a British outlet for the Emerson Records of the USA by having pressings under the Scala label. The Emerson masters duly arrived at the Hayes factory, and consequently some pressings are to be found on Coliseum, (e.g., Walter Scanlan (Walter van Brunt) singing "On Sweetheart Shore" on Coliseum 1674, issued in September 1924, from Emerson 10719, matrix 41440).

A new, but old, supplier of COLISEUMS...

With the acquisition of the Aeolian Co. Ltd.'s business in gramophones, records, recording, and the pressing plant of The Universal Music Co. Ltd., by the newly incorporated Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd. in January 1925, the supply of Coliseums, Scalas, and other labels under contract continued, and the 'G'-prefix stock matrix numbers were maintained, until the new 1926/1927 season began in September 1926. At this stage, Aco discs newly recorded by the Marconi system of electrical recording became available, and, for the first time, Coliseums began to be issued with a true matrix number, in the 'C-...-E' series, C-1-E being on Coliseum 1925. But another matrix series also appeared on the new season's discs, the 'GA' and 'GAX' prefixes as used on Gennett Records. Gennetts had been coming in earlier in the year with a

9000 series obscured by the stock matrix 'G'-prefixed series. Now, the Gennetts appeared on Coliseum from a GA-1 series, the 'GA' signifying, it is believed, Gennett Acoustic. Soon, 'GE' prefixes appeared, interspersed with continuing 'GA' prefixes. It is thought that the Gennett recordings at this time had been recorded in both methods, and that the most suitable were sent to the Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd.'s works. This is substantiated by the fact that some 'GE'-prefixed numbers are lower than others with 'GA' prefixes. The highest number known to me on a Coliseum disc is GE649, on 2058. The significance of the 'GEX' and 'GAX' prefixes remains in doubt, but I suspect a second take (?).

With C-440-E the highest Aco matrix number traced on Coliseum, the label came to an end with the

August/September 1927 supplement, the highest number, 2059.



Figure 2 – Coliseum 1964 (with true matrix no. C-71-E) issued December 1926.

During the fifteen years and three months of Coliseum Records and Coliseums, there is no evidence that the labels ever had any “own” recordings – they were all ‘stencilled’ records, to use the terminology of the industry. An Order from the Courts, in July 1927, had ordered Wm. Cooper Bros. Ltd. to be wound up, there being liabilities of £19,117, as against assets of only £5,431. On December 7th and 8th 1927, Wm. Cooper Bros. Ltd.’s stocks went up for auction at 67 & 69 City Road. The stocks included all manner of gramophones, accessories, Homochord records and Parlophone records, along with its own stock of Coliseums.

Subsequently, in January 1928, The Regent Fittings Company, of 120 Old Street, London, E.C., advertised that it had 10,000 Coliseum discs for disposal at 12s. per dozen, or at 11s. if collected direct from the warehouse. In February,

they could be had, post free, at 13s. 6d. per dozen.

Because of the Gennett, Emerson, and American Vocalion matrices widely used in the production of this second phase of Coliseum discs, many well-established and popular artists from the USA appeared on the Coliseum label, albeit usually under pseudonyms. Here are the names of some of those whose identities were thus concealed.

Among the Vocalists were: Sam Ash, George Willard Ballard, Al Bernard, The Criterion Quartet, Vernon Dalhart, Arthur Hall, Charles Hart, Billy Jone, Irving Kaufman, Harry McClasky, Billy Murray, The Peerless Quartet, Walter Scanlan, The Shannon Four, Elliott Shaw, and The Sterling Trio.

Among the Dance Bands and Orchestras were: The Bar Harbor Society Orchestra, Ben Bernie’s Orchestra, The Black Hawk Inn Orchestra, The California Ramblers, Coleman’s President Orchestra, Coleman’s Montmartre Orchestra, Coney Island Jazz, Conklin’s Society Orchestra, Corde’s Orchestra, Dante’s Band, Max Dolin’s Orchestra, Falcome’s Metronome Orchestra, Green Bros.’ various ensembles, Benny Kreuger’s Orchestra, Joseph Knecht Orchestra, Sam Lanin’s Orchestra, Ray Miller’s Black & White Melody Boys, Harry Raderman’s Orchestra, Ben Selvin’s Orchestra, Harry Yerkes S.S. Flotilla Orchestra, and the Yerkes Saxophone Quartet.

In instrumentalists, there were Van Eps on banjo, Ferera and Franchini on Hawaiian instruments, and Rudy Wiedoeft on saxophone.

There were two military-type bands: Lt. F. W. Sutherland's 7th Regiment Band, and The Knights of Columbus Band.

From European recordings there were violinists Professors Petschnikoff and Joan Manen, also A. Senatra, Anton Hekking, the cellist, Prof. Kretsman and Midiberg, a violin duo, and Monovitch at the piano in the instrumentals. Singers included Julia Culp, soprano; Madame Hedwig-Francillo-Kauffmann and Madame Ekelblad, also sopranos, and Leo Slezak and Jan Note, baritones.

Two dance music ensembles were the Marek Weber String Quartette and the Palais de Danse Orchester of Berlin, under Vintilescu.

Among the British recordings were the orchestras of Wag Abbey, Harry

Bidgood, Leslie Jeffries, Syd Roy, and Victor Vorzanger. John Thorne and Jack Charman were the more prominent singers, and Fred Gibson the most notable comedian - all artists mostly under pseudonyms.

CORRECTION

The following information has been received from Frank Andrews regarding one of the labels discussed in Part 9 of his series of articles, which appeared in the Winter 1998/9 issue of HILLANDALE NEWS:

"On page 144 of HILLANDALE NEWS, second column, I gave the name CASTOPHONE MFG. CO. LTD, which was incorrectly spelt and should have been given as CASTAPHONE MFG. CO. LTD."

"If Music be the food of love, play on."
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In Leather Cloth	Compressed Fibre	Solid Cowhide
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POSSIBLY "DECCA" ADVERTISEMENTS ARE NOT APPEARING IN YOUR LOCAL PAPER.

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¶ But there is no reason why you should not yourself insert these Advertisements in your local Journal. We will gladly loan you stereos pierced to take your own name and address. Why not add your efforts to ours? You will find it pay!

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KURT ATTERBERG AND THE 1928 SCHUBERT CENTENARY

by George Taylor

On the introduction of commercial electrical recording in 1925, the orchestra could be recorded much more realistically than in acoustic days, and a number of companies enjoyed success with recordings of complete symphonies and operas.

Flushed with this success, Columbia planned a competition to celebrate the centenary of Schubert's death, in 1928. The first scheme was a prize for the best 'completion' of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony; but there were strong protests from musicians in both Europe and America against any modern composer adding to Schubert's masterpiece. So the rules were changed, and the main prize was to be awarded to the composer of the best new work conceived "as an apotheosis of the lyrical genius of Schubert". Another prize was still for the best completion of the "Unfinished". There were also subsidiary prizes. Local juries of prominent musicians produced a short list from which an International Grand Jury selected the winners.

The Grand Jury included Guido Adler, President of the International Institute of Musical Scholars; Glazunov; Donald Tovey; Walter Damrosch (president); Alfred Bruneau; Adolfo Salazar; Emil Mlynarski; Carl Nielsen; Franco Alfani; and Max Schillings, "an imposing gathering"⁽¹⁾ – though some names are not too familiar today. Over 500 works

were submitted, of which 66 were received from composers in the British Empire. The top prize was £2000 (then worth US \$10,000).

The work winning the main prize was a symphony by the Swedish composer Kurt Atterberg. Atterberg (1887-1974) is certainly not a well-known musician today, and even in 1928, it is doubtful whether any music lovers outside Scandinavia were familiar with his works. Actually, he was really a civil engineer, and his main employment, from 1912 to 1968 (!) was in the patent office. He had received a little formal training in music, in 1911 and 1913. Apart from composing, he was also a conductor, particularly of the music of Swedish composers, and from 1919 to 1957 was the music critic for a Swedish newspaper. So in some ways, he was well equipped to compose a competition piece.

Atterberg's winning symphony was recorded by the Royal Philharmonic Society Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham on 12th August 1928, for Columbia, of course. It was on eight sides, L 2160-3, WAX3962-9. A CD re-issue of this recording appeared recently and was reviewed in the *Gramophone* for April 1998⁽²⁾. The work is in three movements and is very easy on the ear. It is remarkable that, before this CD, the only performance listed in the 1996 *Gramophone* Classical catalogue was a

broadcast performance by Toscanini in 1943! Indeed, Joe Batten (who produced Beecham's recording) said that after Hamilton Harty's public performance of the work in November 1928, followed shortly by one by Beecham, there was no further performance (in the UK) between then and 1956⁽³⁾ – and any since? This is surprising, as the symphony would be eminently suitable for a Prom Concert, say.

The Beecham records were reviewed in the Gramophone of November 1928 by "KK". The International Jury described Atterberg's music as "an antidote to certain extreme tendencies in modern symphonic writing", (or in other words, one could listen to the work with pleasure?) "KK" thought the first movement showed "a good grip of broad emotional effect, that the orchestration gives at first the impression of being rather overloaded, and that there is at times an attractive tang in the idiom. On the whole, this movement seems to churn away too heavily, with insufficient relief". The second movement (which the reviewer thought was overlong) "reminds us of the serene aloofness of Sibelius, but it has not his power of evoking atmosphere...

The last movement...displays some rather self-conscious archness at the start, and is earnestly vivacious and very loud. Again the orchestration feels crowded... I can find nothing in this work to link it with Schubert... The harmony lacks poise and direction; so do most of the ideas... Atterberg's symphony does not seem to me to have the power or charm to take its place with the popular works of the repertory". And posterity apparently feels the same! The reviewer

of the CD re-issue liked the piece but again felt that the second movement was too long.

When Atterberg was interviewed after winning the competition, he said that he had composed the symphony "partly seriously – for my heart – and partly as a joke – for my conscience". This caused uproar and dismayed Columbia who tried to obtain from Atterberg a denial that the work was a joke – but Atterberg's remark that he had composed the last movement "as a satire on those persons who in connection with the Schubert centenary, posed as great lovers and connoisseurs of Schubert without love or knowledge of his works" certainly did not help. The great critic Ernest Newman thought it possible that Atterberg had deliberately introduced passages in a number of musical styles to appeal to the maximum number of critics (and, of course, Atterberg himself was a critic!). In fact, Newman postulated that the whole work might be a leg-pull by one cynical critic on a number of others!

Newman's remarks were widely circulated and, as we have seen, Atterberg's comments were not exactly helpful. In spite of this publicity (or perhaps because of it), Columbia announced that over one hundred thousand records (presumably 25,000 sets) of the Beecham performance had been sold.

Atterberg himself conducted a recording with the Berlin Philharmonic on Polydor 95193-5, six sides only; but Beecham's eight run only to rather less than 28 minutes.

It should be stressed that in 1928, Atterberg was a mature composer. The

winning Schubert piece, his Op.31, was his sixth symphony (he went on to compose the magic nine in 1956). His main works were symphonies and stage music; indeed from 1916 to 1922, he was music director at the Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm, and he had other musical posts. So what with his patent office work, conducting, his music criticism, and his composition, he was a busy man. WERM⁽⁵⁾ lists quite a number of 78s and the 1996 Gramophone Classical catalogue a dozen or so CDs.

Appendix: The Completion of the "Unfinished".

Along with the main competition, the original objective of a two-movement completion of the "Unfinished" Symphony was not forgotten. Continuations of the "Unfinished" were among the prize-winning works in Poland and Spain, while the first three winners in France were all completions of the symphony⁽¹⁾.

In Britain, the judges were Sir Hugh Allen, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and Donald Tovey. The joint winners of the first £150 prize were Frank Merrick and J. St. A. Johnson. A third prize of £50 was awarded to Havergal Brian for his "Gothic" Symphony. Johnson's work was a symphonic movement, "Pax Vobiscum", dedicated to Schubert's memory.

Frank Merrick (1886-?) was an English pianist, composer and teacher. In early days he toured with Clara Butt and later taught at the major music schools. His completion of the "Unfinished" was recorded for Columbia (four sides, by the Royal Phil, conductor ?, 9662-3, not in WERM⁽⁵⁾). The recording was reviewed in the Gramophone for January 1929. "At first playing, both movements please well, on their own merits... The last

movement has a flavour of Schubert, employs...some characteristic devices, and...uses them in thoroughly tasteful, musicianly style. I like the music for its own sake, and feel sure that it will give pleasure to lovers of Schubert". Pretty good – sounds ripe for a CD re-issue. No entry for Merrick in WERM⁽⁵⁾ or the 1996 catalogue.

Johnson's work was also recorded by the Royal Phil on Columbia 9564, and the recording was reviewed at the same time as the Merrick work. "His piece is conceived broadly, and moves in generous flow (rather monotonously as regards rhythm), is very tuneful and sweet, not at all 'modern', and pleasantly says a number of things neither new nor important, but comfortable to hear. I am glad to be able to say "pax vobiscum, Mr. Merrick and Mr. Johnson".

The symphony by Brian (the only composer amongst Atterberg, Merrick, Johnson and Brian whose name is reasonably familiar today?) did not, apparently, get recorded, at least at the time.

References.

Biographical details from new Grove (1980). Other details of the Schubert centenary competition from Gelatt's "Fabulous Phonograph", 2nd edition 1977, pp. 239, 240, and the Dutton notes.

1. Behind the Needle XXXVI, H. C. Ridout, The Gramophone, XXI (June 1943-May 1944), p.2.
2. Dutton laboratories CDLX7026 (1997). Transfer made from a Norwegian set of discs (L23160-3) according to the Gramophone review but not mentioned in the Dutton notes which state L2160-3. The transfer is excellent.
3. Joe Batten's Book, London 1956, p.68.
4. The Gramophone. VI, (June 1928-May 1929), p. 239.
5. The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music, by Clough & Cumming (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1952).

FIFTY YEARS OF THE 33¹/₃ rpm LONG-PLAYING RECORD: A CONCISE HISTORY

by H. B. Raynaud

Based on a lecture for CLPGS at the Swedenborg
Institute, Tuesday, March 16th, 1999

Last year was the 45th anniversary of the microgroove 45 rpm disc; and now we celebrate 50 years of the microgroove LP's arrival. As we all know, these new record formats eventually led to the demise of the 78 rpm coarse-groove shellac record, in mid-1960 in the UK, and a year or so earlier in the rest of Europe and the USA.

What were the main factors leading to the birth of the LP? In the early days of the 78s, it soon became apparent how limited their playing-time was. There are several ways to extend the playing-time on a disc:

- make the disc larger
- cut more grooves per inch (gpi)
- rotate at a slower rpm.

After the very early 7" Berliner discs (pre-1900), the market settled to 10" and 12" shellac discs, at first single-sided, but soon becoming mainly double-sided. Bearing in mind their brittleness, 12" was the maximum sensible size for the general domestic user. Also, upto the late 1920s, heavy acoustic soundboxes with steel needles were the order of the day. This meant that the minimum groove size practicable would mean a

cut of no finer than say, 112 gpi. Again, the frequency range would be severely cut if the rotational speed fell much below 78 rpm – to, say, 60 rpm, which would hardly be a worthwhile change in itself.

So, the limits for each side of a 78 rpm disc, cut at 112 gpi, would be –

for 12" discs, about 5 min. 5 sec.

for 10" discs, about 3 min. 55 sec.

These times were suitable for single popular items, but really unsuited for the classics, etc. It meant three or four breaks for just one classical movement split between sides. People put up with the situation – they had no option!

Various approaches were tried to solve the problem. Discs as large as 20" were made (e.g., by Pathé, *circa* 1912), although many of these were attempts to create louder music for ice-rinks, dance halls, etc. By the mid-1930s, finer cuts were made, e.g., by Durium, and Homophone (with their 4-in-1 disc). These did get two, shorter, items per side, but both the sound level, and sound quality had to suffer. The bass range of frequencies had to be attenuated,

otherwise the grooves ran into each other.

Discs at slower rpm came also: here, the top frequencies would suffer, so that, at say, 20 or 16 rpm, they would be suitable only for speech, such as "talking books" or office dictation, or similar.

Probably the most successful attempt (albeit a compromise) was the Warner Bros. Vitaphone Disc System of the late 1920s, produced by Western Electric for the original "Talking Pictures", which had the format of 16" discs, rotating at $33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, cut at 100 gpi, playing for 11 minutes per side. Like many Pathé discs, they had the unusual characteristic of being "centre-start". However, they were successful enough to launch sound pictures (which eventually moved on to various sound-on-film techniques), but they were never intended for the domestic scene.

By the mid-1930s, the requirements of the broadcasting industry necessitated something that could play at least one movement of a classical or operatic work continuously, or at least one half of a 30 minute variety or comedy show, plus advertising or sponsorship announcements (for the USA and others with commercial radio). This was the spur to the efforts of Peter Goldmark of CBS/Columbia in the USA, in producing, *circa* 1948, the familiar LP as we know it. Importantly, entire classical pieces could be recorded on one or two double-sided discs; and 5, 6, or 7 popular items could be recorded in bands on one side, with continuous applause between items, if required. Additionally, "banding" allowed

individual pieces to be quickly located, which was essential in broadcasting use.

This was the background to the introduction of the LP into the UK, by Decca in 1950. EMI followed in 1952, with discs on the Columbia label.

Allowing for slight differences between makers, and standards that changed slightly over the years, the characteristics of the modern LP were typically:

	12"	10"
Diameter	$11\frac{13}{16}"$	$9\frac{13}{16}"$
Outside edge of playing area	$11\frac{1}{2}"$	$9\frac{1}{2}"$
Inside edge of playing area	$4\frac{7}{8}"$	$4\frac{7}{8}"$
Concentric run-in	$4\frac{1}{4}"$	4"
Label diameter	4"	$3\frac{7}{8}"$
Thickness	50 thou" (0.05")	50 thou" (0.05")
Weight	160 gm minimum	112 gm minimum
Centre hole	both same as 78s: $\frac{9}{32}"$ (0.286")	
Speed	both $33\frac{1}{3} \pm 0.5\%$.	

The recording curve was either CCIR or NAB, to give an excellent frequency response (compared to 78s) at a sound level only 6-8 decibels down – easily dealt with by the amplifiers of the 1950s.

The groove profile depended on gpi/depth, etc., but a typical profile is: 2 thou" across, 1 thou" deep, angle $87\frac{1}{2}^\circ \pm 5^\circ$; cut:land ratio, 60:40.

Regarding playing times, this would give:

	12"	10"
80 gpi	7 min. 15 sec.	5 min. 10 sec.
150 gpi	14 min. 20 sec	10 min.
300 gpi	29 min. 10 sec.	20 min. 30 sec.

By the early 1960s, the 10" LP was a rarity.

The processing/pressing operations are generally similar to 78s, but with finer tolerances, of course, the record material being Geon™ or PVC (vinyl polymer).

Surface noise was reduced considerably by the use of cutting styli (developed by Frank Capps) which had one or more "burnishing edges". These were ideally suited to the "hot-point" technique, applied by a minute coil of very fine wire on the shank, or, in the case of RCA, RF induction.

Another technique, which was perfected by Deutsche Grammophon was variable-pitching, to extend playing-time and allow much higher sound levels. Briefly, this worked by using an advance head (28" ahead of the main tape replay head, at a tape speed of 15" per second), which sampled the signal, just over one groove ahead, and opened the groove pitch up according to sound level and bass frequencies. The delay on close-down also equalled one revolution of the cutting master. The entire system could be enhanced by application of vari-depth in conjunction with vari-pitch.

Already, the LP master would nearly always be cut from a tape which was already edited, leadered, and timed, and the engineer would experiment with sound level, tonal balance, basic groove pitch and vari-pitch and/or depth if it enhanced the final result. Several factors

would have to be taken into account, e.g.,

- the length of the side
- the sound level required (it may have to be consistent with another side in a set)
- the tonal quality (more bass needs a wider pitch)
- the number of bands required to be cut (between items) as each one, lasting 2-4 seconds, would take 10-15 seconds of margin.

If all of one side was of a similar level and quality throughout, or it was a very short side, then the vari-pitch technique would have little or no advantage. Furthermore, the appearance of a fixed-pitch disc is usually better – an important sales point. Another aid to the process, either in the original recordings, or the preparation of the master, is the use of limiter/compressors...but that would need a separate article to do it justice.

Some companies used to cut the master at half-speed, i.e., $16\frac{2}{3}$ rpm, but I do not feel that the minute benefits warranted the extra time and cost. Rank Records also released records playing at $16\frac{2}{3}$ rpm *circa* 1961 – generally these were only suited to speech, and were not popular.

The LP record ideally suited stereo – also a major subject in its own right. Pye Records claimed to lead the field here, *circa* 1957, with masters cut (by IBC) on the Danish Lyrec machines.

In the early days of the LP, it briefly competed with pre-recorded tapes. Distributed by EMI, these were based on the familiar $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches per second tape. Called "StereoSonic", they

were of good quality, but could not be produced economically, so did not last long. Cassettes arrived in the early 1960s, and are still with us. For many years, many LPs were available on both formats.

In Audio, as in all walks of life, progress, like time, does not stand still.

The Compact Disc is now well-established, and the microgroove record is becoming as historic as the 78. Those arrived at the end of the previous century... Who can predict the form that records will take in another 100 years?

AN 80th ANNIVERSARY NOTE

The Diamond Jubilee issue of HILLANDALE NEWS, from April 1979 reprinted several items recalling the foundation of the Society, which originally appeared in THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS and SOUND WAVE. THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS, of May 1919, published a letter from a Mr. J. W. Crawley, of Finchley, advising that the new London Edison Society (as it was to be known) had been formed, with an initial membership of 30, and that the first general meeting was to be held on Wednesday, May 28th, 1919, at 7.00 p.m., at "The Clachan", Mitre Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C. By the end of 1919, the Society had become known as The City of London Phonograph Society.

The following piece, recording the first meeting, is reproduced from the magazine "THE SOUND WAVE" of June 1919.

THE NEW EDISON SOCIETY.

The new society started off in good form, about fifty enthusiasts being present during the evening, as far as I was able to keep count, between sundry glasses of the best beer I have tasted since the Government ale took the place of the apothecary. The chairman, Mr. N. F. Hillyer (who, I hear, is still remaining as active as ever as secretary to the North London Society) introduced some specimens of the new Purple Amberols—the latest product of the Edison laboratory, which were really better than I expected them to be, judging from their previous reception at the North London. Of course, everyone knows that the North London is exceptionally critical on fine points, but I think the new records bear comparison with the old, at least. Possibly a different machine makes a difference. Anyhow, after one or two amendments had been put, but lost, the rules as drafted were carried, and future meetings are to be held at the Food Reform Restaurant, Furnival Street, E.C.

You Are an Accessory!

7: Speed Testers

by Dave Cooper

How many times did I see advertisements, mainly on old record sleeves, showing the HMV Speed Tester?

Out of all the accessories in existence, I think it was the one I wanted to see, if not own, the most. I had heard collectors asking dealers to look out for one in a box. 'You'll be lucky!' was the response. Well, I was.

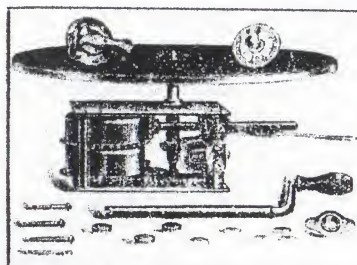
A good friend of mine bought a gramophone and there was one inside the lid. It took a bit of persuasion but we struck a deal. Mine has both box and instructions (see illustration overleaf). New, the HMV Speed Tester would have cost you 5s. in 1927, 3s 9d in 1941. Columbia also did one of these which cost 3s 6d in 1932. It is not something I use much, but it is another one of those *irresistible* items.

What you pay for a Speed Tester will depend on the usual criteria. Has it got a box, instructions, and what is its condition? The usual problem with a

Speed Tester is damage to the gold coloured transfers which spoil the look somewhat. Otherwise you may be looking at parting with anything from around £30 upwards for this item. Mine was considerably more (£40) but has box, instructions, and well-preserved transfers. Anyway, there is the little matter of how much you want the item, isn't there?

A dealer friend recently had an HMV Speed Tester in his collection, not in the usual dark colour, but in a lighter, brighter metal (aluminium?). One thing is for certain, there is always something new to find.

A strange feature was discovered about their operation. When two HMV Speed Testers were tried on an electric turntable running at 78 rpm, in both cases the testers failed to work. Yet when tested on a clockwork turntable, they both performed perfectly. I have no credible explanation for this.



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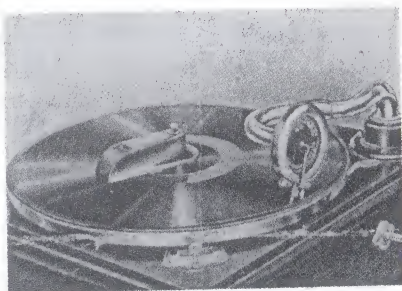
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for the use of
"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"
INSTANTANEOUS
SPEED TESTER



Manufactured by
THE GRAMOPHONE CO., LTD.
HAYES, Middlesex.

"His Master's Voice"

Instantaneous Speed Tester.



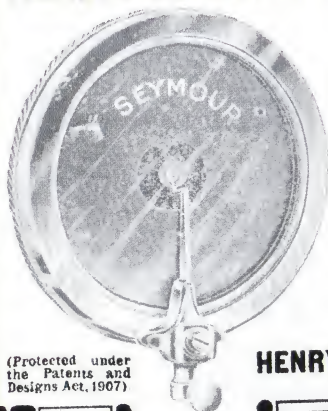
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE.
INSTANTANEOUS SPEED TESTER.

Instructions for Use.—Place the transophone to be tested firmly on a level surface, and whilst playing the first lines of a record place the Tester on the record engaging the hole in the base of the Tester with the centre spindle of the turntable. When the record is revolving at correct speed, the gold disc will remain level with the top of the Tester. Should the gold disc remain above the record or revolving too slowly, should it sink below too quickly. If, when the correct speed has been ascertained, the regulation on the instrument does not point to 78, adjust as shown in Instructions Book issued with each instrument.

Note.—If the gold disc moves regularly upwards and downwards it will generally indicate that the Gramophone is not level.

Caution.—The Tester is designed to pass underneath the Grooved to which the Sound Box is attached, but care should be taken to remove the Tester before it comes in contact with the Sound Box.

● A GUINEA A BOX—AND WORTH IT! ●
(With special tone-bar sound)
THE NEW SUPERPHONE CONCERT SOUND-BOX



(Protected under
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Price - £1. 1s. Od. POST FREE

Gives extraordinary tone and volume with all records.
Diaphragm 2 1/2 inches in diameter.
Special tuning device to provide rapid delivery, and ensure
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Fitted with the "Seymour" back-plate insulation.
When ordering please state if required for "H.M.V.," "Continental,"
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No. 2 Model, with Stylus Cut for Fibre Needles, same price.

UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS from Month to Month:—

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every penny as far as you charge for it. I have a collection of
seven boxes, and I consider the 'Superphone' the best of all.
The tone and volume are wonderful, and I think it is far ahead
of any other make of sound box." F. W. SMITH, Esq., Cavendish
Road, Rochester, Yorks.

MAGNIFICENT TONE, VOLUME, AND ARTICULATION.

HENRY SEYMOUR, Sole Manufacturer—514, CALEDONIAN RD., LONDON, N. 7

New Postal Regulations: Remember Wordsworth's words: "We are Seven"

NEWS FROM THE CLPGS BOOKSHOP

George Woolford; [REDACTED]
WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA, Norfolk; NR23 1RD.

March 1999

The supplies of "Tinfoil to Stereo" are now exhausted. Fascinating Rhythm is in short supply. We are pleased to announce the latest researches of Frank Andrews, and as an incentive to Members, will offer this publication at a discount prior to distribution, which I anticipate will occur towards the end of April. As this will make additional work for me, I will only send all applicants a card as acknowledgement of receipt initially, prior the actual distribution.

FASCINATING RHYTHM – Peter Cliffe. Special purchase in hardback. 280 pages of monochrome illustrations of the stars which made those dance tunes so popular between the two wars. Issued as item **BD-39**; cost, £5 per copy plus postage.

THE E.M.G. STORY – Francis James. The E.M.G. Story tells how E.M. Ginn, came to found a firm to build the best gramophones in the world; It is also the story of the early English gramophone pioneers; and the story of how the gramophone was transformed from a mass-produced clockwork novelty into an instrument of such impeccable quality that no self-respecting composer, music critic or connoisseur would have anything else. Lavishly illustrated with many advertisements and photographs of the

period (1916-1980) and with appendices which tabulate the technical details of every model of English handmade gramophones, The E.M.G. Story can genuinely be said to be the very first chapter of high fidelity reproduction. In hardback, 144 pages, over 100 illustrations. Issued as item **BD-41**, cost of £15 per copy, plus postage.

DATE ALL THOSE ENGLISH 78s – Pt. 1 – Commercial – Eddie Shaw. Further to previous announcements in our magazine, this is an updated official Society Publication, as authorised by the compiler. Issued as 40 A4 sheets with clear plastic cover and slide spine binding. This is issued as item **CL-26**, cost of £7-50 per copy plus postage.

BEKA Double-Sided Records – a listing dating probably from just before the Great War, and including the newly introduced "12" Meister Records". Many quality Band, Orchestral, Instrumental and Vocal records are listed including many Music Hall Artists, some of which are illustrated. Issued as item **CL-31**, cost of £3-00 per copy plus postage.

SOCIETA ITALIANA di FONOTIPIA. Reproduction of an original 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " catalogue with red

borders, dated 1907. Lavish production featuring Operatic, Speech and Instrumental artists who recorded for the Fonotipia label. Biographical text in Italian, large photographs and listings of recordings available. Issued as item **BD-42**, cost of **£12-00 per copy plus postage**.

COLUMBIA 10" RECORDS – Frank Andrews. Re-print for 1999. The original 300-odd pages of information are augmented with a further 22 pages of corrections, bound in. Coloured laminated thin card covers and taped spine. Issued as item **BD-28**, cost of **£28-00 per copy plus postage**.

COLUMBIA 10" RECORDS UPDATE. The 22-page update is published separately for Society Members who have already purchased publication **BD-28**. Presented in a clear A4 plastic folder, suitable for either slipping into the publication, or transferring the information over, as required. Issued as item **CL-31**, cost of **£2-50 per copy plus postage**.

IMPERIAL RECORDS 1929. A wonderful miscellany of popular and classical titles drawn from diverse British, American and Continental sources. Issued as item **CL-32**, cost of **£2-00 per copy plus postage**.

BOSWORTH 78 rpm RECORDS DISCOGRAPHY – Alan Heinecke & Eddie Shaw. Limited edition of 100 copies. Includes full lists of artists, conductors, composers and titles. 72 A4 pages, spiral bound. Cost of **£10 per copy, plus postage**.

CATALOGUE OF EDISON 4 MINUTE WAX AMBEROL CYLINDER RECORDS. Volume 2 – British issues, 1909-1912. Second (Revised) Edition 1974. Copies of the original publication compiled by the late Sydney Carter. Issued as item **CL-33**, cost of **£3-00 per copy plus postage**.

THE GERMAN NATIONAL DISCOGRAPHY – Series 4: Ethnic Recordings – Volume 1 by Dr. Rainer E. Lotz, Andreas Masel & Suzanne Ziegler. Detailed list of artists supplied on request. Hardback, 288 pages. Issued as item **BD-60**, cost of **£30-00 per copy plus postage**.

ZONOPHONE RECORDS – Frank Andrews. The definitive list of all the single-faced records issued by this company in the 5", 7", 10" and 12" sizes. Listing not only the earlier Prescott discs which were initially carried prior to takeover, then numerically all sections of vocal, instrumental and band/orchestral. Also additional Hebrew, French, German and Italian language sections. Comprehensive Index with additional contemporary illustrations taken from the "Sound Wave". With the kind assistance of EMI, we have been given permission to illustrate in colour some 14 variations of labels, many examples actually from their archive, used during this period. Issued in A4 size, 184 pages of text, soft laminated coloured cover. Issued to Members for money received prior to 31st June 1999 as **£19 per copy plus postage**. **Book marked price will be listed as £24 per copy, plus postage.**

Book Review

Bosworth 78 rpm records Discography

by Alan Heinecke & Eddie Shaw

Limited edition of 100 copies

Eddie Shaw, with some help has managed to turn out another of his "D.A.T.E.S." publications, this time on Bosworth. In case anyone out there doesn't know, this is a Music Publishers' label which appears to have started in about 1916 with a short series of discs made by Crystalate, of which two are presently known. Hopefully, this work will bring the other unknowns out into the open. For some reason, which Eddie has not been able to find, no more recordings were issued until 1936. It was then that the new label was introduced with a very wide range of music styles.

Stylistically, the music covers everything from short introductions, some no longer than 7 seconds, to full length pieces of over 3 minutes. The catalogue was aimed at radio broadcasters, film makers and latterly, TV. Much of it falls loosely, I suppose, within the field of 'light music' although there are military bands and theatre organ discs. There's some jazz (not a lot) and some of it is interesting but without setting the pulse racing.

Among the well-known names appearing here are Billy Mayerl, Billy Munn & his Orchestra, Bobby Pagan the organist, Malcolm Lockyer, Peter Yorke, and Steve Race. As there are no personnels for these discs (and none in the files) it would be unwise of me to speculate as to who plays on these but as the label was London-based, it is likely that there are some interesting names

in these groups, culled from top session musicians.

There are quite a few discs here that won't interest anybody except a 'Bosworth' collector, but because of the variety of music that this label issued, it (the discography) is worth the asking price. The book is very well produced and is very easy to read and use with a separate dating guide (no dates in the files). All the artists are identified by initials in the main text but there is a full list identifying these at the start. Each block of masters is identified as to which company (Decca/E.M.I./Rumble) pressed or repressed them. Also listed are New Zealand issues. Decca issues using 'Bosworth' matrices, an artist and conductors index, a composer index, lists of Decca/E.M.I./Rumble masters, and a full alphabetical title listing – all this in 72 pages (A4 size). The rear cover has illustrations of various Bosworth labels plus one of a Decca issue using a Bosworth master.

All in all an excellent book and highly recommended, and while it won't appeal to everyone, it should be purchased to help keep works like this being produced.

Richard Johnson

Available from the CLPGS bookshop, or direct from Eddie Shaw (see small ad. in this issue), price £10.

Reports

London Meeting; 15th December 1998

On 15th December last, the London Members gathered to enjoy the last programme of the year, a Members' Evening on the subject of "Birds". Jackie Raynaud took the floor first with Delius' "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring", played by the Hallé Orchestra, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli from 1969 on EMI ASD 2477, followed by Frank Andrews with the "Cuckoo Waltz" played by Ken Griffin from *circa* 1950 on Brunswick 03968. John Passmore played us "My Canary Has Circles Under His Eyes" sung by George Melly from 1956, and George Frow took us back to an earlier age with "Songs My Mother Taught Me" from 1928, performed by "Nightingales and Beatrice Harrison", on HMV B2853.

The tempo changed with Tom Little's "The Goose Step", a Great War patriotic/propaganda song, sung by Stanley Kirkby, under the pseudonym "Murry Johnstone" on HMV, and Joyce Edwards gave us Sidney Torch at the organ from the Regal Cinema, Marble Arch, playing "Cuckoo in the Nest". Chairman, Howard Martin introduced Billy Bennett on Regal (MR 147) singing "Jailbird", and Wyn Andrews played Victoria de los Angeles singing "The Lover and his Nightingale" from Goyescas, by Granados. Ewan Langford presented a performance of Olivier Messiaen's "Birds on the Tree of Life", and Geoff Edwards gave us Bing Crosby singing "Sparrow in the Tree Top". The first half ended with Barry

Raynaud presenting a live performance from 1975 of the Pasadena Roof Orchestra playing "Bye Bye Blackbird".

After a break for the traditional Yuletide mince pies and wine, Clive Simmonds played "Homing", from a demonstration tape sung by Sylvia Clarke, and Colin Armfield gave us both sides of the Zonophone recording by Will Evans of "Building a Chicken House". George Frow next took the floor with "The Language of the Nightingale", a piccolo solo by Jean and Pierre Gennin, accompanied by the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, conducted by Sir Dan Godfrey on Columbia DB 178, dating from 1931. Andy Newman presented a "Russian Nightingale", sung by Gwen Gately, and Pat Horlick played "The Swan" from the "Carnival of the Animals", sung by Richard Tauber, issued in 1933. Tim Wood-Woolley played "The Cuckoo" by Billy Fern on Winner, and Tim Massey gave us two John McCormack selections, "Brown Birds Singing" and "Mavis", dating from 1925 and 1914 respectively. Howard Martin introduced "When Father Tried to Kill the Cock-A-Doodle-Do" by Billy Williams, and Frank Andrews played "La Paloma" by Conchita Supervia. Finally, Tom Little played Peter Dawson's last recorded English 78 rpm disc, "The Cry of the Wild Goose", made when the singer was 68 years old. As an encore, Frank Andrews sent us all home in a true Christmas spirit with a rendering of "The Twelve Days of Christmas".

Tim Wood-Woolley

Midlands Group A.G.M., 16th January 1999

Chairman Eddie Dunn was unable to be present, but his report was read out to the meeting by the Vice-Chairman, Geoff Howl.

Eddie reported another successful year, the thirty-first for our Group. The six regular meetings gave us a wide range of subject matter, including modern jazz, comedy, opera, and song, and one whole evening devoted to the display and demonstration of vintage machines with their appropriate discs and cylinders. Eddie also paid tribute to all involved in the organisation of the Joint Meeting with the Society's Northern Group, and also our local Wolverhampton Phonofair. We had made tentative steps towards the purchase of new equipment for use at our meetings.

There was some discussion on the subject of the new equipment, and Member Ed Parker proposed a formal motion that definite action should now be taken to acquire such equipment as soon as possible. This was accepted, and it was left to the Managing Committee to appoint a Working Party of three "experts" to implement the purchases.

Of the existing Committee, the same four principal officers were re-elected, as were John Stroud and Richard Taylor. An additional election was Ed Parker, one of the HILLANDALE NEWS Editorial Group.

After the break, we had the usual Members' Choice, in which Members brought along favourite records to share with the others. A mixture of 78s, LPs,

and 45s produced a remarkable variety of individual tastes, and we heard –

- The Jazz at the Town Hall Ensemble, playing "How High the Moon", recorded live at Birmingham Town Hall in March 1948. This was a modern jazz interpretation, relying heavily on the related bebop theme "Ornithology". The ensemble included the late Ronnie Scott, and was on a 12" Esquire 78 – quite unusual;
- Tommy Handley helping the war effort with a 1947 78 recording of "Fuel Saving" and "Put It Out". Another unusual label, this being recorded by United Programmes Ltd.

Other offerings included Al Bowlly with Lew Stone and his Orchestra, Yvette Graud, Peter Sellers, Gene Vincent and Bunny Berigan.

Geoff Howl

West of England Group, 16th January 1999.

Around twelve Members from Devon and Somerset met at the house of Paul Morris in Exeter for a programme entitled "Hot Dance Music for a Cold Evening".

The heat was radiated from an HMV 163 re-entrant, an Edison Diamond Disc Table Model, a disc Pathéphone, and an Edison Opera, to a receptive audience (your reporter having been pre-warmed at a festival of winter ales!). A lot of the glow was provided by the music of top 1920s composer Walter Donaldson.

The multi-media programme started – and finished – with “King of Jazz”, Paul Whiteman (Victor’s answer to B.A. Rolfe?). OK, maybe it wasn’t jazz, but whatever it was, Whiteman was king of it. The mostly vertical programme continued with Harry Reser’s Rounders on an Edison disc, playing “High Hat Harry”. What an ace banjoist he was: his solos pop up on countless 1920s dance records.

Pathé is not often thought of as a dance-band label, but we heard the Pathé Dance Orchestra playing (from the edge) the rousing “Blame It on the Blues” – curiously, a ragtime number. What a good recording process Pathé had – dubbed from large cylinders. Another Pathé disc, “I’ll Say She Does” was played by Edison stalwarts, Green Brothers Novelty Band. Apparently a descendant of the Green family has revived the band, with much success.

Then we heard a fascinating rarity, a directly recorded dance-band cylinder, “Bo La Bo” by Federal Jazz Band, issued about 1919 on Federal. And appropriately, on Indestructible cylinder, “The Maurice Glide” was played later.

Edison Diamond Discs were well represented by their top band, B.A. Rolfe’s Lucky Strike Orchestra. Benjamin Rolfe matched Paul Whiteman in versatility, girth and clever orchestrations. Bizarrely, he never subsequently recorded for any other label, although he was a big hit on radio, and made some Vitaphone short films. We heard him play “Just Like a Melody From Out of the Sky”, “That’s My Weakness Now”, and a little-known Gershwin tune (recorded by Edison on

16th July 1929 – a late one) “Do What You Do” – a fine number that sadly failed to repeat the success of its 1927 predecessor, “Do Do Do”.

The stand-out disc of the evening was however, Dave Kaplan’s Happiness Orchestra, playing “I May Be Right” on Edison (electric). The caption “Happiness” may relate to the presence of the Happiness Boys – just Ernie Hare on this one – but the orchestra was as merry and bright as could be.

Grooved music gave way to perforated as the entertainment continued on Paul’s recently restored Orchestrelle player reed organ (solo model F), which rounded off a highly enjoyable evening.

Paul Collenette

REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

Clockwork Music Group

H. P. Bailey; [REDACTED]
GATESHEAD, NE16 4ES.

Midlands Group

Phil Bennett; [REDACTED] Whitmore
Reans, WOLVERHAMPTON,
WV6 0JW.
Tel: [REDACTED]

Northern Group

Ann Mallinson; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], BARROW,
LA13 0HU.
Tel: [REDACTED]

West of England Group

Paul Morris; [REDACTED]
EXETER, EX4 4HE.
Tel: [REDACTED]

Letters

Chairman's Chat no. 1

Having just received my copy of HILLDALE NEWS, Winter edition, I am writing to express my great satisfaction, tinged with considerable relief, with the outcome of the recent Oxford Meeting.

Although I was unable to attend, through indisposition, I feel that the new team of officers of the Society now in place will be able to steer us away from the rocks, towards which we were surely drifting, and out towards the safety of deep water. Reading and then re-reading the Chairman's Chat, I am deeply impressed with the words of wisdom based on hard common sense and which, if followed, must lead to a wider and altogether better Society.

The key to future success must lie with our ability or otherwise to 'sell' our splendid hobby and interests to the next generation. As a retired schoolmaster of forty years, plus ten more as a school governor, I have spent a lifetime with the young or, as I prefer to call them, 'Tomorrow'. Unless we can involve the next generation we will slowly but surely disappear. Model Engineering Societies and Model Railway Clubs have been faced with the same problem of falling interest for some years, and the future lies in our hands.

In 1999, I have resolved to do three things: enrol at least one new member; play my cylinder phonographs to as many school assemblies as will invite me, and finally, think of a suitable replacement for my anorak!

With every best wish to the new team,

Keith Catchpole

Cockfosters

BARNET, Herts; EN4 0BB.

Chairman's Chat no. 2

Issue no. 224 arrived on my doorstep, just about marking my first year of membership of CLPGS. I always read it with interest, and it seems to renew my enjoyment of Gramophones and 78s in particular. I collect 78s from just about anywhere, and tend not to discriminate too much! It's a bit like buying wine – I look at the label and think "That looks interesting!" I currently have about 250 (records, not bottles of wine!), and would love to be able to date them and know more about artists, the equipment for playing them.... in short, I need to start from scratch.

I find the look, feel, and, dare I say it, the smell of a box full of 78s irresistible. My family groan out loud when I spy a box of records at a boot fair or jumble sale. I could easily buy the whole box (they are usually cheap enough), but one or two grab my attention, and so my collection slowly increases. It has no focus or direction – I just don't know enough about this particular recording medium to specialise.

Which brings me back to the arrival of issue no. 224, and Howard Hope's 'Chairman's Chat'. I'm sorry to say his comments about 'a rather dry and dusty bunch of old men' and 'anoraks' did strike a chord with me. Sadly, I find the magazine inaccessible from my limited knowledge. I would love to be able to read an article geared specifically to encourage a greater interest in the Society and collecting records and equipment. Whilst, as I said, I get enjoyment from reading it, I do feel out of my depth. I don't wish my comments to offend, but maybe to encourage discussion.

One last, depressing comment. I read 'A Cautionary Tale' by Mike Field and my spirits steadily fell. You've guessed it – I now realise I own a 'Crapophone'. Well, two actually, but I don't wish to boast about my

poor knowledge! Twice bitten, thrice shy. Thanks for the belated warning, Mike. At least I know the portables I own are genuine, unless the world has been flooded by fakes...

Bill Risbridger
[REDACTED]

SITTINGBOURNE, Kent; ME 10 2LP.

Chairman's Chat no. 3

I am all for encouraging new members and I do what I can to let people know about the Society. 'The more members, the better'. However, if by this means we get spare money in the kitty, what would I do with a CD?

Last year, I sold my Stereo Unit/CD Player to make way for yet another gramophone, this time a large Victorola Cabinet model. It does not have laser facilities but it does wind up and uses needles, so perhaps a few steel needles or better still, fibre needles would be more appropriate.

I do enjoy the magazine with its numerous articles of interest but let's keep it in the era of gramophones and phonographs, an era in which CDs have no place.

Charles C. Stopani
[REDACTED]

Mannofield
ABERDEEN, AB15 7RY.

Chairman's Chat no. 4

I am pleased to learn that Howard Hope, in his "Chairman's Chat" indicates that the Society is regarded by some as "a bunch of old men, all dusty, wrapped up in a world of catalogues and matrix numbers". I have long seen it as such. While privileged to be a life honorary Member, of which I am grateful, I cannot but see that collecting, and the endless lists of various records, etc., while being invaluable, are not the only subjects for the agenda.

Time moves on. Taking a stroll in any large town or city, particularly London, reveals often enough - in piles of rubbish in skips and dustbins, outside places being repaired, etc. - examples of technology from the past. Once, a long time ago, one could see bits of cast iron internal horns (even external ones), a rain-soaked oak or mahogany cabinet, the remains of an old spring motor, rusting where the grease no longer protected it. Now, we see bits of a colour TV set, music centres, old hi-fi units, loudspeakers, computers - obsolete almost as soon as they are off the production line. But no longer, or very rarely, does one see "78" stuff - even a three-speed device is difficult to find.

Where is it? Gone to the crusher, of course. One day, future societies will publish in the Digital Monthly, faded pictures of a walkman, or a long-play solid state (not rotating) record, with the sad news that no-one knows how these records were reproduced. Cylinders (unplayable because of groove damage) are to be seen only in vacuum chambers, carefully protected from vibration, an armed security man hovering nearby. Our great-grandchildren, now nearing the end of their lives, will be snoring at the back of a little group gathered at some hotel or church hall, while an invited guest explains how the first compact disc was reproduced. Some of them are polite enough to keep their eyes open. A very few show a keen interest. At the end of the lecture, there will be enthusiastic applause when the Chairman thanks the Speaker. Our Society need not be like this!

In an article I wrote for this magazine not very long ago, I poked fun in the introduction and at the end. Those were clumsily edited out, with just the middle of my article being published, which quite ruined it.

I think we could all have a grouse on what our favourite subjects are, but may I remind everyone that the words "Gramophone" and "Phonograph" are words within the audio language which encompasses more than just

pre-electric recordings, cylinders and the like. Who has seen a recording machine? I mean not just some kind of adaptor for a domestic reproducer, but a machine fit for a studio. Even in the Science Museum, on a few visits, there was not one piece of recording equipment, except an old portable recorder used for recording birdsong. Devices such as microphones were to be seen only in the radio section. Where are the many hundreds of Scully's, Western Electrics, Neumanns, to mention a very few, and the privately built machines gone to?

We read of a group of people meeting at some hotel, forming a company. Eventually a studio is built. But of the apparatus – nothing. No mention is made of the difficulties to be overcome, whether the recording machine was gravity driven, or employed a number of slaves installed in an adjoining room, nor anything like that... So let us hope that the articles that appear in our magazine will not be the choice of one person, and that it will continue to be run by a group of people, as is now the case.

In no particular order, it should (as well as the Society in general) include business, artistes, music, and technical information, this last to be of mechanical, as well as an electronic nature, so that the people seen to be yawning are from different persuasions. I have never bought a society tie. Maybe they should be available in different colours, so that during an interval, one could argue noisily within the right section.

Denis Harbour

Hallfield
Bayswater
LONDON, W2 6EB.

We Also Have Our Own Records, part 9

HILLDALE NEWS no. 224, page 232, letter on the *Cherubini Society* records. Both Frank Andrews and Peter Adamson have failed to complete the picture.

Peter refers to "WERM", rightly so, but then fails to continue the journey into Supplement 2 of "WERM", which lengthens the list, as well as prompting a question. The details we have on file are thus:-

10"	1	2	1949	mx. PLB.54-7 lt. & dk. blue
12"	3		1949	mx. PLB.58-9; aka ARP.196/5-6
12"	4	8	1950	
12"	9	13	1951	mx. A.309-M to A.318-M white/blue; supp. 2, WERM
?	14	18	?	not traced
12"	19	21	1951	in WERM, supp. 2

The question raised is, what are CS. 14-18, as they are not mentioned in WERM?

Page 216, Clara Schumann: The records did carry catalogue numbers, NS. 1-14, and the Modern Recordings matrices were MM. 361-374, but the series were coupled strangely - see listing below.

Page 217-8, Clover: Whilst the label states "The Francis Day & Hunter Organisation", the label looks very much like a Boosey & Hawkes label!

Page 182: Your penultimate paragraph [*of the Editors' Desk - Ed.*] mentions "another small" change in editorial policy. Personally, the restriction imposed now limits the likes of ourselves and other members, who produce small runs of books, or even generate to order, with members' interests in mind, and do not particularly want copies spread around waiting for purchasers. Would it not be preferable to limit reviews to publications produced by members only and/or stocked by the bookshop? Please reconsider this decision. We are aware you have a review for our Bosworth discography, which is limited to 100 copies only, and like all works, took a lot of voluntary time and effort to finalise.

Finally, well done, Frank Andrews. All the works produced over the years for our

benefit deserves some LARGE recognition, but for now, Society patron is a start. Frank warrants this. Congratulations!

Eddie & Elaine Shaw

LONDON, EC1Y 8NQ.

Appendix to letter – 12" Clara Schumann Society record listing

Sides recorded by Modern Recording Co., 1951, slate grey/orange; Adelina de Lara playing piano. Couplings strange – listed as seen.

Cat.	Matrix	Title
NS. 1	MM. 361	Clara Schumann & her teaching
NS. 14	MM. 374	(a) Fugue in D Minor, Op. 72; (b) The elf
NS. 2	MM. 362	Nachstück in F Major, Op. 23
NS. 6	MM. 366	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 3	MM. 363	Romance in B flat minor, Op. 28
NS. 4	MM. 364	Traumerei, Op. 15
NS. 4	as above	
NS. 8	MM. 368	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 5	MM. 365	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 6	as above	
NS. 5	as above	
NS. 13	MM. 373	Étude in A minor (after Paganini), Op. 3
NS. 7	MM. 367	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 8	as above	
NS. 9	MM. 369	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 11	MM. 371	Novelette in D, Op. 21, no. 2(a)
NS. 9	as above	

NS. 10	MM. 370	Carnaval, Op. 9
NS. 10	as above	
NS. 12	MM. 372	Novelette in D, Op. 21, No. 2(b)
NS. 11	as above	
NS. 12	as above	
NS. 13	as above	
NS. 14	as above	

Request from the British Music Hall Society - Palace of Varieties – Recordings Wanted

There was, throughout the 1940s and 1950s, a radio programme called 'Palace of Varieties' which captured beautifully the whole spirit of Music Hall. During the later years, reel-to-reel tape recorders had come into being. I am wondering if any of your members might still have either on reel-to-reel or audio cassette any of these radio programmes.

There was at the same time an LP of the Palace of Varieties. This, fortunately, I do have a copy of.

I should be grateful to hear from anybody who thinks that they may be able to assist us.

Max Tyler
Historian to the British Music Hall Society

CHICHESTER, West Sussex
PO19 2FL.

German Polydor matrix numbers

Do any of you knowledgeable readers have any knowledge of the matrix number system used by the German Polydor Company and

its overseas offshoots in the period up to the end of the 78 rpm era?

I have extracted all the Polydor information I can from various reference books in my possession and sorted it into date order, but I must confess that no pattern has emerged. I have identified nearly thirty different combinations of suffix letters with 'BR' and 'BK' seeming to be the most widely used. But I still find that Polydors (and re-issues on other labels) are almost impossible to date and allocate to a recording location.

Bill Dean-Myatt

SUTTON COLDFIELD, B74 2ST.

Associated Radio Programme Records

Can any readers help me with the provenance and content of this record:

12", single-sided 78 rpm; pressed on "early" vinyl (i.e., fairly hard and brittle); no run-in groove, but concentric run-out.

Label: Yellow, black lettering, with 78 rpm stroboscope round it. Wording:-

PRODUCT

COTY LOVE SCENES

Peter Ibbetson

GG.295

ASSOCIATED RADIO PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMME
NUMBER

RECORD
NUMBER
SR.3

21

ARP

MADE BY THE DECCA RECORD CO.,
LTD.

The only numbering in the wax appears to be either GG296H or CG296H.

Content: A male and a female actor reading a scene from the play "Peter Ibbetson" to a background of cinema-style organ music. There is an announcement at the end: "The

scene you have just heard was taken from Act 4 of "Peter Ibbetson".

The two characters seem to be called Gogo and Mimsie (I do not know the play "Peter Ibbetson".) Gogo is apparently in prison for murder, and Mimsie tells him that they can wish themselves anywhere - to hear a symphony, to see Taglioni dance, or to the opera. They opt for hearing "the divine Adelina" (Patti). To an end-of-film-style blare of organ music, Gogo declaims, "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage!"

Who were Associated Radio Programmes? Was this record part of a series of programmes promoting Coty brand toiletries? If so, for which radio station? When and where was it recorded? And who were the actors?

I played it at the January London meeting, and one Member (Jacquie) thought the man might be a youngish John Gielgud. The voice is certainly 'Gielgudish', but it reminds me more of someone I cannot place whose voice used to be heard in plays on the BBC Home Service. The woman, has a smooth, fairly bland, young womanish sound.

All leads gratefully received!



Clive Simmonds

LONDON, SW2 2TZ.

The Lukraphon and Semer labels, from Berlin

Between 1934 and 1937 the Jüdischer Kulturbund (i.e., Jewish Cultural Association) in Berlin operated its own record label called **Lukraphon**. I am trying to reconstruct the catalogue of this label, which is of obvious historical importance, and to reissue the original recordings on a CD to accompany the book. The discs are exceedingly rare. I therefore need to get in touch with –

(a) anyone having any knowledge about the labels **Lukraphon** and **Semer** and who might own original 78 rpm shellac discs, regardless of musical content. We need exact label details, and of course, all the numbers (in the wax, or under the label). Hopefully, some of the still missing discs have survived somewhere.

(b) anyone – eye witnesses, relatives, neighbours – who can provide biographical details and perhaps personal recollections about the personality, popular, classical and synagogal performers known to have had their recordings issued on Lukraphon. In alphabetical order, they are: Edgar Alexander, Kantor Israel Bakon (Warsaw), Oberkantor Josef Borin, Heinz Fenster, Dora Gerson, Ferris Gondosch (Gondic), Channa Kipnis, Marion Koegel, Oberkantor Kupfer (Leipzig, London), Oberkantor Wolf Lewi-Leoni (Mannheim, London), H. Lewin (owner of the Lukra company), Paula Lindberg, Ludwig Misch, Sigmund Petruschka (Shabtai) (Sid Kay), Oberkantor Pinkas (Sofia), Oberkantor Salmo Pinkasowicz, Willy Rosen, Joseph Rosenstock, Mordechai Roth, Kurt Sanderling, Maurice Schwarz (New York), Rudolf Schwarz, Oberkantor Josef

Schwarzmer-Lengyel (New York), Werner Seeling-Bass, Peter Upcher, and Andreas Weissgerber. (I do not need information previously published and readily accessible).

I enclose the illustration of a label.



Thanks!

Dr. Rainer E. Lotz,

BONN,
GERMANY.

“Holographic” Sound

I found the recent article from Ivor Abelson in the last issue of HILLDALE NEWS very interesting, although sadly, I missed his article in a former issue of the stereophonic soundstage created by the use of horn gramophones. I met Mr. Abelson about two years ago at Harpenden, when we discussed an amplifier of unusual design he had come across. This was one, he explained, which could not only be run from a normal AC power supply, but also from a heavy duty 12 volt accumulator and vibrator, which was, of course, normal practice when used outdoors.

The difference here, however, was that, instead of the accumulator supplying the heaters directly when switched to battery mode, the heater windings were retained for this purpose, so that an AC voltage at the

frequency of the vibrator was used to supply the heaters, thus giving the spacious sound attributed to AC heater activation. I think the circuit we discussed used pentodes in the output stage: directly heated triodes such as the 45, or 6B4, would have sounded sweeter.

Mr. Abelson points out in his article that Decca rejected using a transformer for phase inversion, and re-designed their amplifier using a valve on a sub-chassis. I suspect that this was largely a means of running the valve at reduced temperature, as well as creating a certain amount of space around it, in such a way that this could be "sensed" in the reproduction, tending towards "Holosonic" characteristics.

Today, for people with money to spare, a driver transformer could be wound with gold-plated wire, but would be very expensive. However, I was pleased to learn from an article in Hi Fi News a year or two ago, of a Leak valve amplifier re-wired with gold-plated copper wire that sounded very nice when completed. This material can be obtained from jewellers' shops, and is not too expensive for a couple of metres. A gold-plated mains plug, and the special mains lead material now available at as little as £30 per metre, should make no end of difference.

Of course, HT stabilisation must be held within micro-volts using the most modern methods available if the installation is to be regarded as at all serious. I think it was Hi Fi News that also pointed out that octal-based triodes, such as 6SN7, 6B5, ECC33, are much better than the later, noval type.

In closing, coming back to the subject of "driver, or phase inverter" transformers, Western Electric Co (Westrex) in the 1950s used a transformer at the input end of a range of cinema amplifiers, wound to accept a standard 600 ohm line from the projector sound heads, as well as the "Non-Sync", the term used for the record player. This component had a centre-tapped secondary winding, thus splitting the amplifier in two halves well before the output stage. This

enabled overall negative feedback to be retained, which included the output transformer. If this (input) transformer was accurately wound, very little balancing would be necessary. I thank Mr. Abelson for a very interesting and enlightening article. I hope he will write a little more frequently.

Denis Harbour

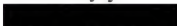


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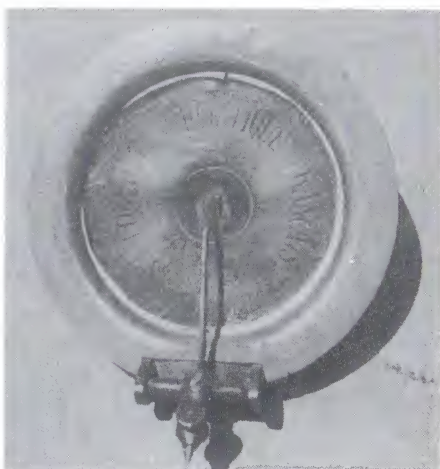
Concert Automatique Français

I am grateful to Mike Tucker of Hornsby Heights, Sydney, who has sent a photograph of the correct soundbox for this 'player'. It is very similar to a Pathé. However, the address upon it is: 8, Bould. des 3 Gares, Chaville Velisy, Seine de Oise. This is close to Paris. While different from what I gave in HILLANDALE NEWS no. 224, many firms were known to have moved premises during their existence!

Ernie Bayly



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